

Reading Strategies for the Social Studies Class

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Introduction

Starting around fourth grade, the nature and purpose for reading begins changing. In the early grades, students read mostly fiction. By the middle grades, students are increasingly asked to read and comprehend nonfiction materials. Not coincidentally, it is around fourth grade when many students “plateau out” in reading. For many students, the social studies text, written at or above grade level, represents a major challenge. First, students often lack the background information needed for understanding. Second, the number and difficulty of new vocabulary words further limit understanding. Third, the writing style and organization may be “drier” compared to the fiction students had been reading.

Teachers can help students successfully navigate the social studies text by teaching a variety of strategies. We gleaned the strategies offered here from several sources including the National Urban Alliance and Seattle Public Schools Reading Consultant Sue Butler, and we have used them in our own classrooms.

► Activity 1

What do I do BEFORE I read nonfiction?

What do I do WHILE I read nonfiction?

Beth Haavik, teacher at Mercer Middle School, created lists of strategies for her students to use when they read nonfiction. By teaching and continually reinforcing each step, Beth’s students have been successful in tackling difficult materials.

Give your students the following strategy lists to keep in their notebooks. Better yet, ask students to create mini-posters listing the steps. The students pull out the strategy posters each time they begin a new chapter in social studies. Continue to model the strategies with the students for maximum success.

What I do BEFORE I read nonfiction.

1. READ the title of the chapter, section, or story.
2. ASK myself, “What do I know about this subject?”
3. PREDICT what I am going to read about.
4. LOOK at the pictures, maps, and diagrams, and read the captions.
5. OBSERVE how the section or chapter is laid out.
6. SEE how long the section or chapter is.

What I do WHILE reading nonfiction.

1. VISUALIZE what I’m reading about.
2. ASK myself, “Do I understand this?”
If I don’t, I reread or refocus.
3. REREAD to make sense.
4. QUESTION the text while I’m reading.
“I wonder why...”
“What would happen if...”
“I don’t understand...”
5. PREDICT what information might be coming up next.
6. STOP often and put into my own words what I just read.
7. CONNECT what I am reading to what I already know.

► Activity 2: Word Splash

Use the word splash to:

- Identify background knowledge at the beginning of a unit of study.
- Create an interest and curiosity about the upcoming unit of study.
- Connect a group of facts into a large framework of understanding.
- Assess student learning at the end of the unit.

To make a word splash, the teacher selects 20–25 words that represent important people, places, or ideas from an article or social studies text (see box below for example). The teacher “splashes” these words on a page.

Hand out a word splash to each student. The students’ job is to draw connecting lines between the words to show how they are related. On the connecting line the student writes a statement telling how the two items are related. In the beginning students can be encouraged to guess even if they are not sure. Allow 10 minutes for this part.

Next, students can pair up in groups of two or three to share their splashes. Students are encouraged to revise their own splashes based on their group discussion. After the pairing up, have students come up to the overhead and draw in their connections. Ask if anyone can make another connection to another word. Have the student come up, and so on.

The students read and make a note when they encounter an item from their word splash.

As a closure activity, students can revise their word splashes based on what they have learned from their reading, either on their own list or again at the overhead.

Follow-up Activity

An alternate activity is to have students create their own word splashes for a chapter of the text. They can be asked to justify the items they include in their own splash. Students can exchange papers with a partner who will attempt to connect the items.

Word Splash	
Choson	Confucianism
China	Buddhism
South Korea	Achievements
Japan	Hangul
Hermit Kingdom	World War II
Self-sufficient	Truce
State owned	North Korea
Divide	38th Parallel
Farming	Natural resources
Technology	Factories

► Activity 3: Read-Talk-Write Read-Draw-Talk-Revise

One method to improve comprehension is to have students put the information into their own words. Yet, paraphrasing can be a difficult task. Read-Talk-Write (based on the work of Hilda Taba) and Read-Draw-Talk-Revise, a variation on the first strategy developed by teachers at Mercer Middle School, help students engage with the text and increase their comprehension of nonfiction materials.

Use Read-Talk-Write and Read-Draw-Talk-Revise.

These two strategies can:

- Help students learn to put information into their own words.
- Reinforce learning by having students restate ideas out loud and on paper.
- Increase listening and speaking skills.
- Engage students more deeply in the text.

Read-Talk-Write

Teach the steps to the entire class; follow up with an occasional practice. Ask the students to use the steps when they are studying or taking notes.

1. **READ** Students read a passage of material for a specified time (2–5 minutes).
2. **TALK** Pair up students, one partner as “A” and the other as “B”. Each A should tell the B partner as much as can be remembered without looking at the text and must keep talking for one minute. An A who runs out of things to say can repeat information. Call time at the end of one minute and reverse the process. The B partner may state the same information, but should try to say it in a different way, if possible. The listening partner needs to focus attentively without interrupting until it is his or her turn to talk.
3. **WRITE** Each student writes what he or she knows about this passage. After writing as much as possible, students may reread the passage to check details.

Read-Draw-Talk-Revise

Use this strategy when you want students to visualize what they are reading to enhance comprehension.

1. **READ** Students read a section of the textbook for a specified time.
2. **DRAW** On a piece of paper, each student makes a sketch illustrating the passage just read. They may use word labels to increase comprehension. Allow about 5 minutes before calling time.
3. In A and B pairs, each partner takes one minute to explain his or her drawing.
4. Students may ask each other questions or make suggestions after each partner has spoken for one minute.
5. Next, students may return to the text to revise their drawings for details and accuracy. These drawings can be used as a study aid prior to a test.

Century 21 World's Fair: A Storypath™

Understanding World Concerns During the Late 1950s and Early 1960s



Tracey Drum

Valley View Elementary School, Seatac



Introduction

Century 21 World's Fair is more than a study of one of the highly momentous events in Seattle's history. It examines a world's fair in light of the Cold War, the ever-building arms race, and America's lagging position in the Space Race. The USSR launched Sputnik the same year that Seattle began plans for a world's fair. Later that year, the Soviets tested the world's first Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. It was becoming clear to Americans that the security they once felt by being situated between two oceans was fast diminishing. The Soviet Union had the technical power to strike the United States with nuclear weapons launched from the USSR. Americans believed (or were taught to believe) that a governmental system without free enterprise, such as communism, threatened their own economic freedoms, and thus could threaten political and personal freedoms. The free world was in danger; something had to be done.

School children regularly prepared for war by practicing for bomb raids; when the warning siren sounded they filed into school hallways and sat on the floor. This dilemma weighed heavily on Seattle's world's fair organizers. They responded by choosing a futuristic theme of life in the 21st century.

Science became both the answer to a better world for tomorrow and a citizen's responsibility to know. Science would someday put a man on the moon, develop greater defenses, and greater spy capabilities, and also make our lives easier. A highly advanced monorail could whisk us out of traffic from the street below, new kinds of telephones would allow us to communicate with others across the nation without the assistance of an operator, and microwaves would prepare our meals with only the push of a button. The fair's theme was meant to entice youth into studying science. Science would inevitably be our key to the future. The federal government endorsed this view by funding the building of a science center with the express purpose of exciting America's youth, both boys and girls, about science.

This curriculum takes students back to the late 1950s, presents the Cold War events, and asks, "How can we use a world's fair to address these concerns?" The students work as fair organizers, building exhibits and designing the fair's attractions. They are presented with the same critical incident faced by the Seattle fair organizers; President Kennedy cancelled his visit to the fair because of the greatest emergency yet faced by his administration — the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Storypath™ is a constructivist strategy for teaching social studies in which students simulate a story by acting out characters they create in a designated setting. This unit is modeled after other Storypaths authored by Margit McGuire, director of the Masters in Teaching program at Seattle University. It contains the essential components of all Storypaths: creation of characters, setting, context building, critical incidents, and a conclusion. The benefits of this strategy will be clear in your class as students become highly engaged in the events that occur. While the events are based on history, the students are given decision-making power that will affect the outcome of the Storypath and may not replicate the true historical record. This blending of the students' imaginations with history stimulates a need to know how the real events unfolded in history and the curiosity and background to question why. This method truly succeeds in making history come alive.

Themes Addressed in this Curriculum:

- Community
- Civic Responsibility
- Competition
- Compromise
- Fear
- The Cold War
- Tolerance of Differences (including political differences)
- Citizens can make choices to address national concerns
- International Goodwill

The Storypath will take students through eight episodes:

1. Recruiting workers
2. Setting a theme
3. Planning and organizing
4. Writing a letter to the editor
5. Building exhibits
6. Running opening day
7. Reacting to the Cuban Missile Crisis
8. Closing down the fair

Timeframe: approximately 1 month

Teachers are encouraged to read through the entire Storypath. Refer to the bibliography on page 32 for resources referred to throughout the unit.

► Episode 1: The Fair Workers

Skills: interviewing, questioning, public speaking, story writing, listening, and note taking

Lesson Objective:

To develop realistic characters who reflect life in 1957 and learn about what life in America was like at that time.

Time Allotment: 2–3 days

Resources Needed:

- Books with pictures of people from 1957 showing fashion and hair styles
- People to interview who remember 1957
- Narrative (page 21)
- Job application (page 22)

Lesson Activities

1. Read the narrative aloud to your students and ask them to think about that last question.
What do you think? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of hosting such an event. Ask what might be the purpose of a world's fair. (Promote international goodwill, teach about what others are doing in science and culture, showcase new inventions and advanced technology, preview ideas for potential inventions, prepare people for the future, amusement, etc.)

Note: You can change the fair location to your school's city or town, or make it completely fictitious. You may wish to rewrite the narrative to better reflect your community, or use it as a guide for a study of the Spokane World's Fair of 1958.
2. Ask students to think about who might volunteer to help with such an event. Record their ideas on butcher paper. What skills would they need to bring? What jobs might they do? (Some examples are: architects, construction workers, interior designers, health and safety specialist, exhibit organizer and recruiter, cartographer, public relations person, financial planner, entertainment director, food service, artists, writers, graphic designers, transportation coordinators, etc.)

3. Tell students that they all will be fair workers who will organize and run the exposition. First they are to create the characters they will play for the duration of the study. There are several ways this can be done, and it is essential that students have sufficient time to create visual representations of their characters. An easy method is to cut out 6-inch tall bodies from multicultural paper (representing skin tones) that students can then dress with fabric, construction paper, and wall paper scraps. Use yarn or wool for hair. Bring in magazines, books, yearbooks, and other pictures, perhaps even family pictures if you have some, that show the clothes people wore in 1957 and their hair styles.
4. Once students have completed their characters, they can then fill out a job application. Refer to the list generated earlier about the jobs people might do at the fair. Ask students to think about what experience would be necessary to get hired to do certain important jobs, such as managerial positions and other decision-making jobs. What age is likely for someone applying for that job? (Remind students that such jobs require experience.) Ask them to think about life during that time. What job experience could they have had? Could they have had experience working with com-puters? This may be a good time for students to consult books and people who remember the 1950s.
5. As a homework assignment, have students interview someone they know who lived during the late fifties. The students generate the questions, or you can use the questions and interview guide provided on page 23. If your students have not had experience with interviewing, you may need to invite someone into the classroom, such as the principal or a district administrator, to model how it is done and how to take notes. Students can use the information they have learned about the time period to make up a short story about their characters. This activity could be done separately from the job application and shared in class, or it could be connected to the final question listed on the application, *“Please explain why you want the position.”*
6. It is important to introduce all the characters to the entire class. A good way is through the format of a job interview. The introductions can be time consuming, so it is best to space them over several days. You may want to set “appointments” for the job interviews just as in the real world, scheduling five or six per day. Give students time to prepare for the interviews by telling them the questions ahead of time.
 - Tell us about yourself.
 - How will you help to make the Century 21 World’s Fair a success?
 - What is your vision for the fair?

Brainstorm appropriate answers to the questions. What is the purpose of the questions? What specifically does the interviewer want to know about the applicant when asking, *“Tell us about yourself.”* Emphasize that students need to know the information they put on their applications because the interviewer might have other questions. During the interviews, the teacher should ask questions that would further the thinking about the characters and their role in the late 1950s. The interviews give the teacher an opportunity to see commonalities in student presentations and to suggest connections. For example, if two students have similar work experience, ask them if they have worked together. Guide students to stay in character by speaking to them as if they were their characters. Post the characters and job applications in a place visible to everyone.

7. The students should keep a journal to record their thoughts and experiences throughout the course of this study. Students should write from the perspective of their characters, not themselves. The students can write about how they are feeling about taking part in this opportunity, the excitement of hosting a fair in their community, their feelings about the job interview, the job they hope to get, etc.

Assessment: Authenticity of characters, job applications, job interviews, journal entry

► Episode 2: Context Building ~ Deciding on a Theme for the Fair

Skills: reading for textual evidence, making inferences, critical thinking

Lesson Objectives:

1. To analyze written and visual material in newspapers and magazines from the late 1950s and infer the widespread public concerns of people living during that time, while identifying the textual evidence that supports the inferences.
2. To identify a theme for the fair that would address the public concerns of the late 1950s.

Time Allotment: 2 days

Resources Needed:

- Magazines and newspaper from the late 1950s
- News article: “House Authorizes Century 21 Funds.” *The Seattle Times* (18 August 1959).

Lesson Activities:

1. Make copies of the first news article for the class and read it together. Encourage students to stay in character as they discuss its meaning. The last paragraph of the article describes the next steps for fair organizers, including deciding on a theme. Tell students that all world’s fairs have a theme that usually addresses issues facing the people of that time or celebrates the anniversary of an important event. Since this fair will not be ready in time to celebrate the 50-year anniversary of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, ask students to consider possible themes. Do we know what issues were facing the people of this time? Have students share the issues that arose in the oral history interviews. Ask the students, “What are some other ways we can find out what people were thinking at this time?” If there is little response to this question, relate it to issues today. What are we concerned about today? How do we know people are concerned? You might discuss some of the issues mentioned in a *Weekly Reader* magazine or *Time for Kids* publication.
2. Bring in resources that allow students to research the issues people were concerned about in the late fifties. Consult decade books and contact your local library for magazines and newspapers. These publications offer not only news and opinion pieces, but also advertisements depicting the social values of the time. *Life Magazine* is a wonderful resource with which to start. You can also contact your local historical society. It is likely to have a collection of local newspapers the students can flip through. This research activity could be arranged as a field trip; students would feel like true researchers clad in the protective white gloves. Another resource that is especially great for the more dependent reader is, *Weekly Reader: 60 Years of News for Kids from 1928–1988*.

Depending on how much experience your students have had with newspapers and magazines, they first may need to spend time learning about how these publications express opinions. While newspaper articles are supposed to be objective, reporting only the facts, which “facts” are chosen for printing is a subjective decision. Not all news ends up in newspapers. The newspaper business is just that, a business. It prints stories that sell papers, stories they think people will want to read. What factors go into choosing articles? What inferences can we make about what people were thinking during this time given the stories we see printed in the paper? Use *Life Magazine*’s article, “First Hard Facts on All Russian Sciences” from December 16, 1957 to model this reading strategy to your students (handout on page 9).

This article examines Russian advances in various applied sciences and compares them to the progress of American science. The tone is wary and the article attributes the great successes to the invaluable rewards (such as more freedom) that the Russian government gives to scientists. While the article is lengthy, and will likely put your class to sleep, the last seven paragraphs are helpful for making inferences about what Americans were thinking (or were encouraged to think) at that time.

After students have read this section of the article, ask them if we can infer what people in America were concerned about at this time. When students share their ideas, ask them, “How do you know?” or “What in the article makes you think that?” In pairs, have students record the information they find in their research by dividing their paper in two columns and writing, “What are people concerned about?” at the top of the first column and “How do I know?” at the top of the second. The second column is a place for students to cite the evidence. See example below.

After the students have had the time to study various resources and record concerns, provide time for them to share their findings in a classroom discussion. List the concerns on the board.

What are people concerned about?

Americans are worried that the Soviets’ advances in science means that they may use it to try to turn everyone into a communist.

How do I know?

The article, “First Hard Facts on All Russian Sciences” from the December 16, 1957 issue of *Life Magazine*, shows the ways in which scientists in the USSR have surpassed American scientists. It says, “Others suggest just the opposite: that the Russians will continue to concentrate on weapons, hoping to defeat the West or blackmail it into surrender.”

3. Remind students that the purpose of their research was to determine a theme for the fair. Ask what theme might address these concerns? Have the students write about possible fair themes, then share their ideas. This would also be a good time to share the second news article (see page 24) announcing the \$12.5-million federal grant to build a science center. Ask students what we can infer about the concerns of the federal government. How will building a science center address that concern? When the students are finished discussing the concerns of the late 1950s, they can vote on a theme.

Note: Science is not the only possible theme; another option is civil rights, which was a major issue in the news at that time. The purpose of Storypath is not to replicate historical events exactly as they occurred, but to blend students’ imaginations with the historical record. Your students cannot help but view the problems of the late 1950s with 21st-century eyes. A world’s fair today would be very different. Any theme the students choose will ensure that their world’s fair is a personalized experience. Their choices will prompt a need to know how and why the real fair organizers made the choices they did.

4. Students can respond to what they have learned about the concerns during these times and how their chosen theme will address them by writing in their journals from the perspective of their characters.

“First Hard Facts on All Russian Sciences”

Earlier this month, addressing a NATO conference in Paris, U.S. Senator Henry M. Jackson pointed out that “. . . Russia now turns out more scientifically trained people than any Western nation, and is accelerating the output at a higher rate than any nation.”

Needing scientists, the Soviet simply trains them, and the individuals have no choice. Even if Russian students had unlimited choice they would doubtless choose science in any case. Students can see the rewards given to scientists. Moreover there are not many other fields a bright young Russian can enter. There is no demand for talent in private industry, advertising, salesmanship or marketing. There are comparatively few lawyers in Russia. Medicine is not a highly regarded profession: practicing physicians, roughly 70% of whom are women, rank only slightly above factory foremen. Science is the thing.

The entire Soviet educational system is geared to discover and develop potential scientists. All Soviet children attend the “Seven-Year School.” The brightest go on for three more years, graduating at about 17. These schools operate on a six-day week and a 10-month year. By graduation, the Russian child has absorbed a tremendous amount of science education: 10 years of mathematics through trigonometry, five years of physics, four years of chemistry, five years of biology and one year astronomy.

As the Russian student goes through school, he is watched closely for signs of intellectual ability. If he has talent, he is sent on to an institute of higher education where the Soviet incentive system takes hold. He is paid to study, and the higher his grades, the more his pay. The brightest students continue studying and continue to be paid until they are full-fledged scientists. In sum, the Russian system of science education is a frighteningly good one, for Russian purposes. It can only be assumed that it will produce an even greater challenge in the future than the challenge that exists now.

As to where Russian science is heading and what its status will be in another generation, no one can say. Some Western scientists suggest that Russians suffer from an inferiority complex which is distilled in the arrogance and the rudeness of Khrushchev. Now that the Russians have shown the world, through the Sputniks, that they too can produce technological wonders, they may become a little easier to live with and may begin to direct more of the scientific effort toward peaceful projects. Others suggest just the opposite: that the Russians will continue to concentrate on weapons, hoping to defeat the West or blackmail it into surrender.

In any case the West has no choice but to assume the worst. It may come in two forms: in military conquest, the primary concern right now, or in peaceful conquest through the Soviet state-controlled system of education.

Russia is producing hundreds of thousands of trained technicians Russia is producing men and women who know how to operate uranium mines, to build and run power plants, to do laboratory work, to put science to practical use. Within a generation the Soviet Union will have an enormous pool of such technicians, far more than she needs domestically, who can be used as a living export commodity. Sent into Africa, India, Indonesia, they may develop these areas according to the Communist scheme while the U.S., still talking bravely about free enterprise and Point Four, declines. It is this prospect, in addition to the purely military implications, the Americans may consider as they watch the Sputniks tumbling through the cool twilight over the secure and perhaps still somnolent country.

Excerpted from: “First Hard Facts on All Russian Sciences.” *Life Magazine* (16 December 1957): 108–123.
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Extensions:

1. Music is another way in which issues are expressed. Bring in a collection of music from the time and examine the lyrics.
2. For additional context building about this Cold War era in America's history, students can pretend they are journalists reporting to Americans on the state of world affairs. Compile their news articles to mimic a sample newspaper from the late 1950s. Either individually or in pairs, students can investigate people, places, ideas, events, and technology. Here are some sample topics:
 - Cuba's revolution in 1959
 - Fidel Castro
 - China
 - Mao Zedong (Mao Tse Tung)
 - War in Indochina (Vietnam with French colonial powers)
 - Soviet Union
 - Soviet Union invades Hungary (1957)
 - Soviet Union launches Sputnik (1957)
 - Soviet Union launches the first ICBM (1957)
 - Nikita Krushchev
 - Communism
 - Compare and contrast space technology and atomic weaponry advances of the United States and the USSR
 - More topics on the Cold War (Before the late 1950s)
 - Senator McCarthy and the McCarthy hearings
 - Canwell hearings in Washington State (occurred in what is now the Center House at Seattle Center)
 - The Rosenbergs

Assessment:

Identified concerns and textual evidence
Journal entry
Authenticity of theme chosen for the fair

► Episode 3: Organizing the Fair

Skills: drawing, mapping, spatial, communication, cooperative learning, planning, math, script writing, public speaking, designing, research, writing, organization

Lesson Objectives:

1. To learn about world's fairs in general and understand what they have in common.
2. To plan and organize the fair grounds, events, and attractions so they reflect both the theme and the criteria necessary for a world's fair.
3. To learn about the popular culture of the late 1950s to 1962.
4. To learn about the science exhibits that were first featured at the Science Center.
5. To learn the early history of the Space Needle.

Time Allotment: 3–5 days

Resources Needed:

- Step-by-step directions for each group (pages 25–29)
- Alan Fowler's *World's Fairs and Expos*
- Architecture books and other books featuring buildings and their designs
- Research materials on music and entertainment of the late fifties to 1962
- Collection of time-appropriate music
- Examples of other calendars showing a schedule of events
- Research materials for learning more about the science topics chosen for the exhibits
- Self-assessment on working together (page 30)
- Information about prices of goods in 1962 (historical consumer price data can be found at: <ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/specialrequests/cpi/cpiat.txt>)
- Description of 1962 World's Fair (available at www.historylink.org, "World's Fair")

Lesson Activities:

1. Read Alan Fowler's *World's Fairs and Expos* to the class. Have students jot down a list of possible answers to the following statement: *A world's fair should have . . .* Generate a list of ideas.
2. In this episode the students will work in five separate groups to help build the frieze. Each group will have a different focus, as they will concentrate on contributing one or more of the essential components listed by the class in the previous step. These groups are, *Fair Design and Layout*, *Amusement Park Rides and Food*, *Entertainment*, *Architectural Attraction*, and, because the federal government is allotting \$12.5 million to this, a *Science Center*. Give consideration to the jobs for which the students have applied and their experience when assigning them to one of these groups. The students will be designing the setting of the fair and the events and attractions. Pass out the step-by-step worksheets to help guide the groups as they work.
3. When each group finishes with its assignment, it will present its work to the rest of the class. Students can also go on-line to see what the fair organizers at the real Century 21 World's Fair did in their positions many years ago. The students can share how their projects compare and contrast to

those of 1962.

4. Have students complete the self-assessment on working together with their groups, then journal about their experiences working on the job in a team and preparing for the World's Fair.

Note: Episode 4 is a critical incident and will begin before Episode 3 is fully completed. It should occur when the Architectural Attraction group is about half finished with its structure. The fair workers should be interrupted to hear a letter to the editor from a concerned citizen. You also will need to set a date for the fair's opening day that is about three weeks from the start of Episode 3.

Description of the Five Groups:

*** Fair Design and Layout**

The Fair Design and Layout group will map out the entire fair. The students will use graph paper to first sketch a bird's eye view of the fair, showing where specific buildings and areas will be located. They will share this information with other groups that will be depending on the decisions made by the Fair Design and Layout group. Next, this group will create the frieze of the fair on a large piece of butcher paper. Students will use construction paper to build exhibit buildings, pathways, benches, transportation vehicles, information kiosks, and other structures.

The World's Fair site was 74 acres. Teachers can easily incorporate math into this group's learning as an extension by requiring students to find the dimensions of the area set aside for the Science Center, amusement park, architectural attraction, food court, and other structures.

Materials: graph paper, large piece of butcher paper, construction paper, glue, class-generated list of what a world's fair should have, architecture books, and other books featuring buildings and their designs.

*** Amusement Park Rides and Food**

The Amusement Park Rides and Food group will use construction paper to create the rides and attractions in the amusement park and to develop menu boards of restaurants in a food court. This group could easily be divided in two. The students build the rides and attractions out of construction paper, determine the their cost, and glue them to the frieze. This group will also determine an acceptable price for the food served in the food court by consulting old newspapers and using estimation and ratios. The menu boards can be posted in a designated corner of the classroom.

Materials: graph paper, large pieces of construction paper or poster board, construction paper, glue, class-generated list of what a world's fair should have, and 1962 newspapers or magazines (or CPI data) for researching prices.

*** Entertainment**

The group responsible for entertainment will create a calendar of events for fair goers to enjoy. They will research the arts from this time and arrange the guest appearances of famous performers in music, movies, TV, theater, literature, circus arts, comedy, etc. This team will develop a schedule of events for the duration of the fair and advertise one or more of the events by recording a radio ad. The ad can feature clips of music fair goers could hear. It will be played on the school intercom to generate excitement for the fair's opening day.

Materials: Research materials on music and entertainment of the late fifties to 1962, collection of time-appropriate music, examples of other calendars showing a schedule of events, paper, markers, tape cassette, and tape players.

*** Architectural Attraction**

The Architectural Attraction group will design and build the centerpiece of the fair. The students will use various materials to build a large version of it for display in the classroom. A small version made from construction paper will be attached to the frieze. This group is also responsible for publishing a display board for fair goers to read when they visit the site. The display will tell amazing facts about the construction, size, and function. It will present interesting stories about how the structure came to be and will entice visitors to come see it by telling them what they can experience.

Materials: Description of the Space Needle from the 1962 World's Fair, poster board, materials for building such as cardboard, paper maché, popsicle sticks, newspaper, paint, etc.

*** Science Center**

The group creating the Science Center will be responsible for designing the building and the exhibits inside. The students can get ideas for exhibits by reading on-line material describing the Century 21 World's Fair. As a group, students will decide what science ideas to feature. They should research the topics to gain a better understanding. Students can use boxes for dioramas, or poster board for displays to make a replica of what fair goers will see and do inside the Science Center.

Materials: Description of the science exhibits at the fair, research materials for learning more about the science topics chosen for the exhibits, poster board, shoe boxes, construction paper, glue, markers

Assessment:

- Authenticity of group's contribution to the fair — reflects the theme and the class-generated list of the components of a world's fair
- Observation
- Group's presentation to the class
- Group's final product
- Self-assessment of cooperative group work
- Journal entry

► Episode 4: Critical Incident #1

Skills: critical thinking, interpersonal, discussion, letter writing, persuasive writing

Lesson Objectives:

- To understand and respect varying points of view
- To understand how writing changes depending on your audience
- To write a persuasive argument in the form of a letter to the editor

Time Allotment: 1 day

Resources Needed: Letter to the editor (see page 31)

Lesson Activities:

1. Interrupt students to read a letter to the editor that appeared in today's newspaper. The letter is from a citizen of the community who thinks the architectural attraction is a "monstrosity" and detracts from the character of the community.
2. Open the floor for discussion. Allow students to react to the letter. Try to guide the discussion so that the students think about both points of view. Then ask what should be done about it. List the students' ideas on the board.
3. Make a group decision about what to do. Have students respond to the day's events by writing in their journals.
4. As both citizens of the community and as fair workers, students can then write a letter to the editor. Talk about how a journal entry and a letter to the editor differ. Would you use the same language in your letter that you may have used in your journal? How would the tone change? How could you argue your point persuasively?

Extensions:

1. Ask people who remember the 1962 World's Fair to come into the class to talk about their thoughts of the Space Needle as it was being built. Ask them to speak about what others were saying at that time.
2. Look for other examples of building structures in your community that evoked controversy as they were being built. Some examples in the Seattle area are the Experience Music Project, Kingdome, Safeco Field, and the Smith Tower. How did the architects and builders respond to the criticism?

Assessment:

- Journal entry
- Observation of discussion
- Letter to the editor addresses the concern and is appropriately persuasive

► Episode 5: Building Exhibits

Skills: research, writing for publication, designing an exhibit

Learning Objectives:

To conduct research of a country, state, culture, company, industry, technology, science concept, or other topic of 1962, analyze the material and present it in an informative and visually interesting way as an exhibit for the fair.

Time Allotment: 1–2 weeks

Resources Needed:

Books and other materials on research topics, descriptions of real exhibits at the Century 21 World's Fair. See bibliography of potential sources.

Lesson Activities:

1. Students work individually or in pairs to make exhibits for the fair. You have many options for exhibit themes. You may ask student to research a country, write a report, and display the project on poster board. Or, you may require that each project relate to the science or math the class is studying. The exhibits can be as specific or as broad as you wish.

The Seattle World's Fair had a vast array of exhibits from countries, states, ethnic groups, industry, corporations, businesses, fashion companies, art collectors, and museums. These exhibits were meant to teach. Many exhibits demonstrated a vision for the future by incorporating the fair's science theme. Some exhibits depicted the technology imagined for the 21st century, even though the technology did not exist at that time. Exhibits of fancy, futuristic cars, living rooms, vending machines, direct dialing booths, and robots aimed to inspire.

Decide whether you want to tailor this episode to meet specific academic needs for your class, or broaden it to encompass anything that stimulates the imagination of students.

Extensions:

1. Students can make posters and flyers advertising their exhibits to prospective fair goers and post them around the school building.
2. Have students read about some of the real exhibits that could be viewed at the fair. What do these exhibits say about the concerns in 1962? What was the vision for the future? How accurate is this vision for life in the 21st century? Have students evaluate the accuracy of this vision in writing.
3. Since this fair is set in 1962, you may wish to have your students make a short presentation to each class in the school to educate the other students about world events during this time.

Assessment:

Exhibit projects
Evaluative writing piece on the vision of the 21st century

► Episode 6: Opening Day!

Skills: organization, communication, interpersonal, social

Learning Objectives:

1. To learn about what it means to open an event ceremoniously and plan and organize the opening for the class's World's Fair.
2. To teach others in the school community about the fair by inviting them to attend and see the exhibits.
3. To evaluate the student's hard work and the success of the fair by comparing the results to a class-generated list of successful qualities.

Time Allotment: 3 days

Lesson Activities: The school community is invited to visit the fair and view the exhibits.

1. Two days before Opening Day, tell students that openings for most big events include special activities. Important guests are invited to speak, special acts are performed, and a ribbon is often ceremoniously cut to officially open the gates. Ask students what they would like to do to open their world's fair. Brainstorm a list of ideas on butcher paper. Ask students how they can make them happen. Ask for volunteers to work with others who may need help carrying out their ideas. Give students time to make the necessary preparations for the opening day ceremonies.
2. Once the preparations have been made, ask students how they will know if the fair is a success. Record their ideas on butcher paper or overhead transparency so that they can be viewed again later.
3. Have students write in their journals about their thoughts, concerns, fears, and feelings about the opening of the fair.
4. Open the 1962 World's Fair!
5. At the close of the first day of the World's Fair, pull the fair workers together to reflect on the day's events. Ask students if they felt their fair was a success. (Refer to your previous list.) After discussing the students' thoughts and ideas, suggest they continue to evaluate the fair by writing a response in their journals.
6. Invite students to read about the opening day ceremony and the special events at the 1962 Century 21 World's Fair. Either in writing or as a class discussion, the students can compare and contrast these events with what occurred in the classroom. They may be shocked to learn that fair organizers filled an arena with water to have beautiful women water ski in circles. They also had acrobats ride a bicycle on a tight rope tied to the top of the Space Needle.

Extensions:

The opening ceremony at the Century 21 World's Fair began much like the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibition. President John F. Kennedy pressed the key of the same golden telegraph used by President Taft 53 years earlier. This time, however, the signal came from a star 10,000 light years from Earth. In a simultaneous telephone call broadcast at the fair, President Kennedy said: "Let the Fair Begin!"

Other presidents used this gold-encrusted telegraph to mark the opening of other events in Washington's history. Calvin Coolidge triggered the final dynamite explosion that opened the Great Northern Railway's seven-mile tunnel through the Cascades, and Herbert Hoover opened the Longview Bridge over the Columbia River.

As an extension, your class could make a telegraph to be used by the school principal to mark the opening of the fair. He or she could deliver a speech over the intercom.

Assessment:

Journal entry

Observation

Compare and contrast writing or discussion

► Episode 7: Critical Incident #2

Skills: Investigative historical research, critical thinking, listening, questioning, writing, computer

Lesson Objectives:

1. To learn the history and events of the Cuban Missile Crisis.
2. To read primary source material including letters, speeches, and news articles of the Cuban Missile Crisis and assimilate its meaning by writing a response in the form of a journal entry, letter, or opinion piece from the perspective of the student's character.
3. To learn the history of U.S. foreign relations with the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Time Allotment: 3 days

Resources Needed:

Letters from the president and someone who will interrupt your class to deliver one of the letters (page 31)
Resources on the Cuban Missile Crisis (see book list, page 32)
Newspaper articles reporting on the Cuban Missile Crisis
Internet

Lesson Activities:

1. Read the letter submitted to the class by the president's secretary. Insert a date for the president's visit that is about three days later than the current date. Talk about what this visit means for the fair.
2. Ask students to think about the preparations needed to get ready for the president's visit. Generate a list of ideas. Allow students about 10 minutes to begin the preparations or go on to something else on your educational agenda. At some point interrupt them with a new letter from the president, marked urgent. It is fun to ask someone who works in the office to interrupt your class by either personally delivering the letter and making a scene of its importance, or by calling to ask someone to come to the office to pick up a letter that appears to be very important.
3. Read the letter informing the fair workers that the president cannot attend because he has a cold.
4. Allow the students time to react, then have them respond in their journals.
5. A day or two later, interrupt class to show the students breaking news. President Kennedy is on live television and radio from the Oval Office announcing to the nation that a Soviet arms buildup is occurring in Cuba, an event otherwise known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. You can show the famous video clip of Kennedy's address to the nation. Or you can access an audio recording of it through the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library's web site (www.jfklibrary.org). Go to the search button, and type "Cuban Missile Crisis." You'll find many other interesting resources at this site.

At the end of the broadcast, discuss its meaning with students. What does this event say about our relations with the Soviet Union? And with Cuba? What can we do at the fair? How can we show support for our president during this time of crisis?

Allow students a chance to brainstorm ideas, respond in their journals, and act on any plans they made. They may choose to write a letter to the president saying they are sorry he missed the fair, but wish him well during this critical time. (The President did, in fact, cancel his plans to attend the closing day ceremonies at the fair because of "a cold." The fair closed on Oct. 21, 1962, the day before JFK announced the Cuban Missile Crisis to the nation.)

6. Research the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis during the two weeks after President Kennedy gave his address to the nation. Excellent online resources offer primary source materials. The PBS web site has the correspondence letters between JFK and Krushchev:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/frames/resources/ken/resource.html#cubaletters>

You can also follow the story in your local newspaper. HistoryLink.org has a detailed article about JFK's cancellation plus details of the Cuban Missile Crisis, including JFK's options. Pool together the resources to build a timeline of the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

7. Ask students to think about the causes of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Have them discuss their ideas and evaluate the president's response by writing a journal entry, letter, or opinion piece through the perspectives of the students' characters.

Extensions:

Research U.S. foreign relations with Russia and Cuba today. How have they changed over time? How are they similar?

Assessment:

Observations
Journal entry
Timeline
Written response

► Episode 8: Closing Day Celebrations

Skills: organization, cooperative learning, reflection

Lesson Objectives:

1. To bring closure to the unit of study by planning, organizing, and implementing the closing day celebrations for the fair.
2. To experience first-hand the historical artifacts left behind by taking a field trip to see the Metropolis 150 exhibit at the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) and the Seattle Center.

Time Allotment: 3 days

Resources Needed:

Arrangements for a field trip to MOHAI and the Seattle Center (optional)

Lesson Activities:

1. The last day of the fair is just as eventful as the first. Have students plan how they would like to end the fair. This episode brings closure to the unit of study and is essential for the fair workers. Once they have all the details planned, such as what will occur, who will attend, etc., conduct the closing day celebrations.
2. At the end of the celebrations, have students reflect on their experience in their journals. They can address issues such as, When is a nation a threat? What would a world's fair in our community look like today? What might be the theme?
3. Take a field trip to see the Metropolis 150 exhibit at MOHAI and then to the Seattle Center. Beginning in 2005, when the museum moves to its downtown location, people will be able to travel between the two sites via monorail. MOHAI's exhibit is rich in artifacts, with the fair featured prominently. Century 21 represents one of the six themes that organize the exhibit's portrayal of Seattle's 150 years of history — Vision City. At the Seattle Center, students can walk the grounds to identify structures from the fair. They can go up the Space Needle, visit the Science Center, walk through the amusement park and food court, and take note of how the community center has changed over time.

Extension:

1. Invite people in who remember the fair. Ask them what how they were impacted by the fair and the Science Center. What was their vision of the future? How does it compare to the present? What did they think of the Soviet Union?
2. Research the Cold War from 1962 onwards. How has that period in history influenced our national decisions and international relations? Relate it to our current relations with China and Cuba.

Assessment:

Authenticity of closing day ceremony plans and contributions
Observations
Journal entry

The Narrative: Episode 1

This story takes place a long time ago in a place very close to home. It is 1957 in Seattle, Washington. The city is small, young, and not well known when compared to other cities in the country. In fact, if you ask other Americans where Seattle is located, most would guess somewhere outside Washington, D.C.!

Seattle looks very different in 1957. The tallest building is the Smith Tower at 522 feet. There is no highway through the city, only two- and four-lane roads with stoplights, and nowhere near as many traffic jams. On sunny days, it is breathtakingly beautiful. Mount Rainier towers over the city. The Cascade Mountains feed the sparkling Lake Washington east of the city with fresh melted snow. To the west, Seattleites enjoy gorgeous views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountain Range.

The people of Seattle love their community. They enjoy their surroundings by participating in many recreational activities including boating, swimming, fishing, hiking, camping, skiing, tide pooling, bird watching, gardening, and much more. Many help build airplanes at the Boeing factory close by. Others work in the timber industry to help bring wood to carpenters and construction workers. Still others work in the fishing industry or as fruit and vegetable farmers. The people of Seattle are friendly, generous, and caring of one another. They enjoy living in Seattle and work together to keep it a nice place to live.

The older residents of Seattle remember a wonderful time, 48 years ago, when their city hosted a world's fair. It was called the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. People came from all over the world to see it. The most advanced technology of the time was put on display to show how the world was changing and how important Washington would be in connecting the country to the rest of the world through trade.

You could see machines that would clean and gut fish then put them in a can, \$1 million worth of gold, trains, and "horse-less" carriages. (Today we call them cars.) Ten of these early cars were raced to the exposition from New York City. The winning Model T Ford made the trip in 23 days! President Taft even opened the event by pressing a gold nugget on a telegraph machine that sent an electrical message from his home in the White House through wires to signal the start of the opening ceremonies. Other nations and states were invited to open exhibits to share their cultures and technologies. About 3.7 million people came to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition to make it a huge success and one to be remembered fondly.

Some of the residents are interested in hosting another world's fair in the city to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the AYP Exposition. This fair would be bigger and better than the previous one. The elected members of the City Council like the idea and the State Legislature just agreed to finance \$5,000 to study the feasibility of a new exposition. Hosting a world's fair is a huge undertaking. For it to be a success, the city will need the help and support of the people who live there. What do you think?

Episode 1

Century 21 World's Fair Job Application

Name of Character: _____

Position for which you are applying: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Education [Please include school attended, dates, and degree(s) achieved]: _____

Work Experience:

Position and Name of Company	Dates	Responsibilities	Reason for Leaving

Please list your skills: _____

In the space below, please explain why you want the position.

Episode 1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Oral History Interview of Life in the Late 1950s

- Step 1:** Find someone to interview who can tell you about life in the late 1950s. This person can be a member of your family, family friend, or neighbor who can remember life then.
- Step 2:** Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the interview. Explain that you are beginning a study of the late 1950s and you need to know about life at that time. Ask the person if he or she has photographs, a high school yearbook, or other items to show you from that time.
- Step 3:** Ask the questions below. Add more questions if you want. Write the answers to the questions on a separate sheet of paper. Remember to take notes while you listen. That means to write the key ideas and not every word the person you're interviewing says.
- What do you remember from the late 1950s?
 - What did you do for fun?
 - What were some of your favorite places to go?
 - What music did you listen to?
 - What were some favorite TV or radio shows?
 - What clothes did you wear?
 - What kind of food did you like to eat?
 - What were the issues in the news?
 - Do you have any special stories about your life at that time that you would be willing to share?
- Step 4:** Thank the person you interviewed.

Episode 2: News Articles

Seattle's World Fair Under Way but Delay Recommended

Fair supporters have a lot to celebrate. The state commission hired to study the feasibility of a Seattle World's Fair reported good news to the legislature. A 74-acre site was located in Seattle at the base of Queen Anne Hill. It is the current location of the voter approved civic center.

Business and civic leaders have also joined the bandwagon. Out of 400 surveyed, 98% say they fully support the idea of a fair. "We need to get our city on the map," said Ned Phillips, a local business man.

After raising corporation fees, a tax that has remained the same since Washington became a state in 1889, Governor Rosellini helped secure state government support for the fair. Yesterday, the legislature passed a \$7.5 million bond issue to fund a world's

fair. Representative Ray Olsen assures, "Not one penny of this \$7.5 million will come from the general fund of the state of Washington."

Even with all this support, many think hosting a fair in 1959 to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the AYP Exposition is too soon. "This will be the biggest event ever to take place in Seattle, we want to do it right," Joseph Gandy, president of the Seattle World's Fair, told a room full of fair organizers after he recommended the fair be held in the spring of 1962.

The next step is to decide on a meaningful theme that will rally interest and support from exhibitors. "A world fair in Washington will also give us a glimpse of the future as well as an incentive to even greater progress," says Governor Rosellini.

(written by curriculum author)

Episode 3

Fair Layout and Design

Members of the Team: _____

Welcome to the team! You have a very important job. Your team must map out the entire fair. You will decide where each building will be located, how it will be used, what it will look like, and where to place the special attractions such as the amusement park, science center, and architectural attraction. You must also design pathways, places for people to sit, plan how people will get from one end of the fair to the other, and make the overall design appealing to both fair visitors and the citizens of Seattle.

Step 1: On a separate piece of paper, list all the buildings and services that will be needed. Consult the list your class put together when finishing the statement, “*A world’s fair should have _____.*”

Step 2: Ask the entertainment group what special buildings and construction they will need. Add to your list.

Step 3: Ask the amusement park, science center, and the architectural attraction groups how much space they will need. (You will not be working on their buildings, only providing them a location.) Check back with the other groups later as they develop their plans.

Step 4: List important things your team should consider when planning the layout of the fair. Remember, this fair is likely to attract *millions* of people.

How will you keep crowds moving safely?

How will help be provided to people who need it?

Where will people park their cars?

How will elderly people or others who can’t walk long distances get around?

What are some other problems that could be solved by designing the fair carefully?

Other concerns?

Step 4: Sketch a bird’s eye view of the fair on graph paper. Make changes as needed, check that everyone on the team agrees.

Step 5: Once the team has agreed on the fair layout, determine the dimensions of the amusement park, science center, and architectural attraction. Give each group a copy of the layout of its area and the dimensions.

Step 6: On a large sheet of butcher paper, use a pencil to lightly sketch out the layout from the graph paper. Show the other groups the locations of the architectural attraction, science center, and amusement park.

Step 7: Decide on the architecture and design of the buildings; keep in mind the theme of the fair. The design should appeal to fair visitors and Seattle’s citizens. For ideas, look at books with photos of buildings.

Step 8: Begin constructing the buildings out of construction paper. Make sure you and your team agree on the scale size of the buildings. (You would not want an information kiosk to be the same size as an arena, so you must communicate frequently with your team members.) *Share this scale with the other groups!*

Step 9: Glue the buildings, pathways, benches, etc., to the butcher paper. Do not attach the architectural attraction, the amusement park section, or the science center. The groups designing them will do this.

Step 10: Check your lists to make sure you’ve remembered everything. Are there any other features your group should add to the frieze to make the fair a pleasant place to visit?

Step 11: Prepare a short (no more than five minutes) presentation of the group’s work. Share with the rest of the class your final product. Explain how millions of visitors will come to the fair safely and have an enjoyable time. Include highlights your group thinks will be especially interesting and fun for fair goers.

Episode 3

Amusement Park and Food

Members of the Team: _____

Welcome to the team! You have a very important job to do. Your team must design the amusement park and food court.

Amusement Park Instructions

Step 1: Look at the list your class generated on what a world's fair should have. List amusement park rides suggested by the fair workers. Add the rides and attractions your team would like to include.

Step 2: Take a look at your list. Do you have something for everyone to enjoy (toddlers, moms, dads, grandparents, the adventurous and the cautious)? Add to and remove items from your list as needed.

Step 3: What are some other things your group could add to the amusement park to make this an enjoyable place for everyone to visit (benches, restrooms, food stands, etc.)? Add them to your list.

Step 4: Ask the Fair Layout and Design group how much space will be devoted to the amusement park. Will all the rides your team identified fit safely? Given the dimensions of your space, draw a sketch of the amusement park on graph paper.

Step 5: Use construction paper to build the pieces of the amusement park. Check with the Fair Layout and Design group to make sure your team is building the rides and attractions to *scale*. Ask them where the amusement park will be located on the frieze.

Step 6: Decide on the cost of the rides. Will fair goers have to pay for each ride or will the cost be covered in the fair admission? Post signs on rides if necessary.

Step 7: Use glue to attach the pieces of the amusement park to the frieze.

The Food Court Instructions

Step 1: Look at the list your class generated on what a world's fair should have. List any foods suggested by the fair workers. Add to the list the food and drinks your team would like to eat at the fair. Remember that this is a *world's* fair, so be sure to include food from around the world.

Step 2: Look at your list. Do have something for everyone to enjoy (toddlers, moms, dads, grandparents, people from different ethnic communities)? Add to and remove items from your list as needed.

Step 3: Consult old newspapers or magazines from 1962, or the Internet, to research costs. Use estimations and ratios to help you determine an acceptable cost for each of the food and drink items you plan to offer at the fair.

Step 4: Use construction paper and markers to create menu boards for restaurant booths in a food court. List the name of the restaurant at the top of the menu board. Post the food and drinks that can be ordered there and the price each will cost.

Step 5: Prepare a short (no more than five minutes) presentation of the group's work (for both the food court and the amusement park). Share with the rest of the class your final product. Include highlights your group thinks will be especially tasty and fun for fair goers.

Episode 3

Architectural Attraction

Members of the Team: _____

Welcome to the team! Your job is extremely important because your group will create the architectural feature that will “WOW” fair goers. You are also designing and building the souvenir that will be left behind for the citizens of the community to enjoy.

Step 1: Look at the list your class generated on what a world’s fair should have. List four adjectives that describe what the fair workers (including your team) believe the architectural attraction should be like.

Step 2: Think about the theme of the fair. Given this theme, what other adjectives might describe this attraction?

Step 3: Take 10–15 minutes to draw as many sketches of possible architectural attractions that come to mind. Students in your group can do this together or individually.

Step 4: Lay all the sketches out so that everyone in the team can see them. Read through the list of adjectives once again. Talk with each other about which ones best fit the list. Listen to each team member share his or her thoughts.

Step 5: Choose a fair method for deciding one design, such as voting. Make your decision.

Step 6: Determine the size, shape, and dimensions of the architectural attraction. Share your sketch of the design with the Fair Layout and Design group and ask them to show you where it will be located on the frieze. Do you have enough room? Make any necessary changes.

Step 7: One or two people will use construction paper to make a small version of the architectural attraction and attach it to the frieze. Make sure it is to *scale*.

Step 8: Determine the materials your group will need to create a large version of your architectural attraction. List them on the back of this paper, then talk to your teacher.

Step 9: Build the architectural attraction together.

Step 10: Give the architectural attraction a name.

Step 11: Read a description of the Space Needle written for the 1962 World’s Fair. Use it as a model when creating a display board about your architectural attraction. Your group will write a description of the centerpiece of the fair. Tell amazing facts about its construction, size, and function. Share interesting stories about how it came to be and entice visitors to come see it by telling them what they can experience.

Step 12: Publish your group’s written description on poster board.

Step 13: Prepare a short (no more than 5 minutes) presentation of group’s work. Share with the rest of the class your final product. Include highlights your group thinks will be especially interesting and fun for fair goers.

Episode 3

Entertainment / Publicity

Members of the Team: _____

Welcome to the team! Your job is extremely important because you decide who will come to the fair and perform for fair goers. Because you need to attract *millions* of people to the fair over the next six months, you will want to invite performers whom people will especially want to see. Your team will coordinate a calendar of events and develop radio advertisements featuring some of the events you have arranged.

Step 1: Look at the list your class generated on what a world's fair should have. List the kinds of entertainment suggested by fair workers.

Step 2: Think about the theme of the fair. Given this theme, what other possible acts or shows can you think of? Add these to your list.

Step 3: Research famous performers from this time period. Use books, old magazines, the oral history interviews you did in Episode 1, and other research materials to help your team create a list of possible performers.

Step 4: Examine the list of performers with your team. Identify who would be interested in going to see these performers (for example, young children, teens, older adults, different ethnic communities). Write the likely audience next to the performer's name. Do you have a balance? Is there something for everyone to enjoy? Adjust your list as needed to reach a wide audience of people.

Step 5: Look at the examples of calendars and schedules your teacher has. What do they all have in common? How are they different? Which does your team like better? Why? Use these examples to help your team design a sketch of the calendar of events.

Step 6: Each team member should help to revise and edit the calendar of events. At least two group members should work on publishing the calendar of events. The remaining group members need to write a short script (about 30 seconds) for a radio ad advertising one or more of the events listed on the calendar.

Step 7: Practice the radio ad together. Record it on a cassette tape. This ad will "air" closer to the time when the fair is scheduled to open.

Step 8: Prepare a short (no more than five minutes) presentation of group's work. You can share with the rest of the class your taped advertisement. Include the highlights your group thinks will be especially interesting and fun for fair goers.

Episode 3

Science Center

Members of the Team: _____

Welcome to the team! Your job is extremely important because you decide what will happen inside one of the main attractions — the science center.

Step 1: Look at the list your class generated on what a world's fair should have. List any science exhibits or displays the fair workers thought should be there.

Step 2: Think about the theme of the fair. Given this theme, what science-related topics might be of interest to fair goers? What science ideas do you think are important to learn? Use the description of the science exhibits from the real 1962 Century 21 World's Fair to help your group think of ideas. List your group's ideas.

Step 3: Determine the size, shape, and dimensions of the science center. Draw a sketch of the building and show it to the Fair Layout and Design group. Ask them to show you the location of the science center on the frieze.

Step 4: Choose one or two team members to make a small version of the science center out of construction paper. This model will be attached to the frieze. Make sure it is to *scale*.

Step 5: Assign an exhibit or display for each team member. Work together as you think of how you will exhibit these scientific ideas. What science information will you need to know? How will you find that information? Use books and other resources to help you.

Step 6: Use a shoebox to create a diorama of each exhibit. Displays can be attached to poster board. Make sure your exhibits and displays are clear and easy to understand. Label the exhibits and displays and explain in writing the science ideas being taught.

Step 7: Prepare a short (no more than five minutes) presentation of group's work. Share your final product with the rest of the class. Include highlights your group thinks will be especially interesting and fun for fair goers.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self-Assessment: How did you do?

Read the following statements and rate yourself on a scale from one to five. Circle the number that best describes your group work: one means that you did not do it at all, five means that you did it the best you could.

1. I offered ideas about things my group and I could make.

☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

2. I listened to other people's ideas.

☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

3. I asked questions when I didn't understand.

☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

4. I disagreed politely.

☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

5. I made positive comments to the other group members.

☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

6. I was willing to change my ideas to help the group work together.

☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

Finish the following statements:

I was a positive member of the group because . . .

I could improve on my group skills by . . .

Episode 4 and 7

Sample Letters

(Insert name of architectural attraction here) a Monstrosity!

Dear Editor,

I was born and raised in this beautiful city and have lived the entire 63 years of my life here. My parents were some of the first to take the transcontinental railroad and then travel north from Tacoma by steamboat, before Seattle even had the railroad. I consider Seattle my home.

I write about my history in this city because I feel it is important the architects of this so-called (insert name of architectural attraction here) realize that I have watched this city grow and change over the years as I have grown and changed along with it. While I see the opportunity for our small West Coast city to host a “World’s Fair” and will even welcome the throngs of people who will invade our town for six months, I cannot accept this monstrosity of a “building” being erected in the once quaint lower Queen Anne Hill.

It is clear the architects of this “attraction” have completely dismissed the look and feel of the community and have instead endeavored to build a hideous, unnatural structure that will bring about the demise of our pleasant, unique, Seattle character. I, for one, am appalled!

Mrs. Howard Jorgenson

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Fair Organizers,

I wish to congratulate you on your enormous success with the fair. It is wonderful to know that communities such as yours all across our great nation are working together to address national concerns. You help to make our nation strong and our people ambassadors of the great moral fabric of America.

I am writing to announce my visit to the Seattle World’s Fair. I will be there (insert date). Air Force One will land at Boeing Field at 1:00. I’ll have a short four hours to enjoy your tremendous world’s fair, of which I’ve heard so much about. I am very much looking forward to this.

Sincerely,

President John F. Kennedy

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Fair Organizers,

The president wishes to send his deepest apologies, as he will not be able to visit the World’s Fair as he had planned. He has a touch of the cold and will be returning home for some much needed bed rest.

Sincerely,

Pierre Salinger
Press Secretary

Boswell, Sharon; McConaghy, Lorriane. *100 Years of a Newspaper and its Region*. Vancouver, BC: The Seattle Times Company 1997.

A wonderful compilation of photographs, events, and people featured in *The Seattle Times* from 1890 to 1990. The reading is at a very high level for children.

Boutis, Victoria. *Looking Out*. New York: Four Winds Press, 1988.

Though pleased to be part of the “in” crowd at her new school, Ellen’s growing awareness of her parents’ social concerns, expressed in their support of the condemned Rosenbergs, forces her to make a choice about what really matters in life. Approximate reading level, 5th grade. Approximate interest level, 7th grade.

Davenport, Merle. *Cold War*. Grand Rapids, MI: Instructional Fair, 1997.

This is a great resource for teachers wishing to delve more deeply into the issues and events of the Cold War. This curriculum includes maps, a timeline, and reading and writing activities for students.

Doherty, Craig A.; Doherty, Katherine M. *Building America: The Seattle Space Needle*. Woodbridge, CT: Blackbirch Press, Inc., 1997.

Discusses the history of the structure built for the 1962 Seattle World’s Fair, describing the engineering, architectural, and mechanical processes involved.

Duncan, Don. *Meet Me at the Center*. Seattle: Seattle Center Foundation, 1992.

This excellent resource tells the story of Seattle Center from the very beginning, when a world’s fair was only an idea. It served as a “textbook” for writing this curriculum.

Fowler, Allan. *World’s Fairs and Expos*. Chicago: Children’s Press, Inc., 1991.

Describes historic and modern world’s fairs, including previews of new and future inventions, styles of architecture, art, and entertainment.

McGuire, Margit. *Storypath Foundations: An Innovative Approach to Teaching Social Studies*. Chicago: Everyday Learning Corporation, 1997.

Explains the theory and practice of the Storypath model.

Tames, Richard. *The 1950s: Picture History of the 20th Century*. New York: Franklin Watts Inc., 1990.

Text and pictures highlight main events of the 1950s.

Weekly Reader: 60 Years of News for Kids from 1928–1988. New York: World Almanac, 1988.

This resource highlights four *Weekly Reader* articles from each year from 1928 to 1988.

www.historylink.org

This wonderful database of King County history includes secondary articles, biographies, and photographs. Check out the article “Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition opens for a 138-day run on June 1, 1909” and the announcement that JFK cancelled plans to attend the closing day ceremonies of the fair due to the Cuban Missile crisis.

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>

Every history teacher must check out this site! Type key words for a search and find more information than you’ll ever need in a format that is useful to teachers. The site has lessons, information on using primary sources, links, student projects, photos, audio clips, and more.

www.jfklibrary.org

This site has a wealth of information on John F. Kennedy. It has a searchable database of speeches, correspondence with Krushchev, and audio clips on the Cuban Missile Crisis and the space race.

http://more.abcnews.go.com/sections/us/cuba/cuba_index.html

ABC’s site has great information about the Cuban Missile Crisis. It includes short video clips, such as JFK’s famous address to the nation announcing Cuba’s military buildup. It also has transcripts, a day-by-day timeline, information about key people involved, and more.

www.pbs.org

The PBS web site has links to information about the Cuban Missile Crisis.

<http://www.seattlehistory.org/Exhibits.html>

The Museum of History and Industry’s web site now has the full text of an article that appeared in the 1962 Seattle World’s Fair Official Guidebook.

<http://www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspan/curcan/main.html>

“The Cold War and Red Scare in Washington State” is a curriculum project for schools developed by the University of Washington Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest. It provides information and primary source materials on the impact of the Cold War in the Northwest.

<ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/specialrequests/cpi/cpiat.txt>

Information on consumer prices

◆ Other Resources

Puget Sound Regional Archives, located at Bellevue Community College, has primary source materials about the 1962 World’s Fair. Make an appointment to look through the boxes. If you submit a blank video tape, the staff will copy filmstrips on the fair; some include fair advertisements. An interesting silent “film” shows a woman visiting the fair. Students can use it for a creative writing project.

Travel Magazine



Kelly Plowman

Valley View Elementary School, Seatac



Introduction

The Travel Magazine curriculum strives to integrate the study of a country and its culture with reading, both fiction and nonfiction, and the travel forms of writing. Students play the role of a freelance writer/photographer for Travel Magazines, Inc. Their assignment will be to research a country in South/Southeast Asia; this curriculum, however, can be used, for the study of any country or region. Students will use various sources, including the Internet, to research their country. They will then create journals, complete with photographs, of their experiences and impressions while exploring their country. Final magazine layout will include a first-person account of their travels through the country, a review of a book in which the action is set in the country, an advertisement, and one additional “choice” article. This assignment is lengthy, so I like to keep tabs on students’ progress by having them write a business memo, although other options are a friendly letter, business letter, e-mail message, etc.

What Is a Travel Magazine?

Lesson Objectives:

Students will be able to identify the different modes and forms of writing (narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository) used in a travel magazine.

Time Allotment: 1–2 hours

Resources Needed:

Modes and forms of writing descriptions of narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository writing available in most writing textbooks.

Various travel magazines or *National Geographic* magazines

Lesson/Activities:

1. Ask students to brainstorm reasons “Why people write.”
(They write to communicate, inform, persuade, relate experiences, for the love of it, etc. — Writing connects us to work, to culture, to society, and to existing knowledge.)
2. Through the worksheets, introduce students to the four modes/forms of writing. Modes are narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive. Go over each form of writing, its purpose, and examples.
3. Pass out travel magazines. Tell students their assignment is to find an example of each of the four modes of writing and cut them out of their magazine. Then list each mode on a separate piece of paper and explain how they identified each piece of writing (i.e., What was the author’s purpose?).

Extension/Enrichment:

Students work in groups to create “Modes of Writing” posters that state the purpose of each mode and show examples from magazines.

Assessment:

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the four different modes of writing by correctly finding examples in a travel magazine. As a class, they will share and discuss the results.

► Lesson 1: Journal of Travels

Lesson Objectives:

Students will learn about a country located in Asia on the Pacific Rim. They will analyze pictures, captions, essays, and charts to gather information about their country. To demonstrate knowledge of their country, students will write a first-person account of their travels through the country.

Time Allotment: 4 weeks

Resources Needed:

Access to library for research materials
Full Circle with Michael Palin (videocassette)
Power Point software (optional)

Lesson Activities:

1. Show class any 30-minute section of *Full Circle with Michael Palin*. Afterwards, ask students the following questions: What is the purpose of this video? What role does Michael Palin play in the video? What did you learn? What did you find interesting? (*Full Circle* is a documentation of “Michael Palin’s journey by air, train, boat, and occasionally very sore feet around 50,000 miles of the Pacific Rim.”)
2. The class saw how Michael Palin went on an adventure in the video to explore diverse cultures and varied landscapes of the Pacific Rim — now it is their turn! Tell students that they are to become freelance writers/photojournalists on assignment for *Travel Magazine, Inc.* First, they will need to research their country thoroughly. Then, they will make notes on the information they collect regarding the country’s land, flora and fauna, climate, history, people (in both rural and urban areas), important sites, language, music, government, natural resources, foods, cultures, and traditions.
3. Their assignment is to write a journal, a first-person account of their travels through the country and include what they have learned. Explain that they do not need to go into a lot of detail about everything in their notes. It is more important that students be creative and tell the reader what they experienced on their journey.
4. Remind students that their writing should help readers learn more about the country and the people who live there. To illustrate their journals, students can use magazine photos, postcards, or drawings. Remind students to think about details that make their country different from others. Encourage them to think about the sights, sounds, and smells they might encounter on their journey. Students can make their journals interesting by creating stories about characters whom they met along the way, including information they learned about their country.
5. After the journals are written, students can use the Powerpoint software program to create a magazine layout for article with photos. Students should present their journals to the rest of the class.

Extension/Enrichment Activity:

Have students choose at least one item from the list below to include in their travel magazine.

- Write a human interest story about a local sports figure.
- Write an editorial expressing your opinion or position on a timely news story or event.
- Create an editorial cartoon. (Visually express an opinion to a timely news story or event regarding your country.).
- Become a food writer and critique a traditional dish.
- Become an entertainment reviewer and critique either your country's music, dance, theater, or other performance or cultural traditions.
- Interview someone from the country you are studying.
- Compare and contrast the government of the country you are studying to that of the United States.
- Create a five-day weather forecast for your country.
- Take a traditional folk tale or fairy tale and rewrite it to reflect the customs and culture of the country you are studying. (You might want to use the book *Korean Cinderella* as an example.)
- Create a pictorial calendar of fun things to do year-round in your country.
- Create a list of symbols/signs or customs that will be important for visitors to know.
- Pick a city or important site and create an advertisement to attract tourists.

Assessment:

Name: _____

Journal: Required Elements

_____ map of country	_____ history
_____ land	_____ language
_____ flora and fauna	_____ music
_____ weather/climate	_____ government
_____ people in rural areas	_____ natural resources
_____ cities and important sites	_____ foods
_____ people in urban areas	_____ culture/traditions

Six Traits of Writing

_____ Organization	_____ Word Choice
_____ Ideas	_____ Sentence Fluency
_____ Voice	_____ Conventions

Power Point Presentation _____

Throughout this curriculum students will be using different modes/forms of writing. To assess whether students are able to identify different forms of writing, you may have them complete the assessment below, either orally or in writing after lessons 1–4.

Modes and Forms of Writing Assessment

Name: _____

Title of writing piece: _____

What form/mode of writing is it? _____

How do you know? List at least three facts to support your answer.
(Hint: Think cue words in prompt, framework of writing, and key features.)

Scoring Rubric

- 4 Exceeded expectations — student has completed more than the required elements and has presented project in a unique way.
- 3 Meets expectations — student has completed all the required elements.
- 2 Below expectations — student has completed most of the required elements; however, some are either missing or could have been improved.
- 1 Significantly below grade level expectations — student completed very few required elements.

► Lesson 2: Business Memo

Lesson Objectives:

The student will learn how to structure a business memo. Students will report the status of their research project by sending their editor/teacher a business memo.

Time Allotment: 2 hours

Resources Needed: *Write Source 2000: A Guide to Writing, Thinking, and Learning*

Lesson Activities:

1. Maintaining open lines of communication is important in the workplace. Brainstorm with students different ways employees can communicate with each other (memos, e-mail, minutes, and proposals).
2. Pass out the memo from the editor of *Travel Magazine, Inc.* (page 38).
3. Discuss with students the purposes of a memo — a brief written message that can be used in different ways — asking and answering questions, giving instructions, describing work done, and reminding people about deadlines and meetings. Have students read through the memo. What is the editor's goal in writing the memo? What is the editor's point?
4. Discuss the format of the memo with students.
 - Beginning — List the date, the reader, and the writer. State your subject clearly.
 - Middle — Provide a full explanation.
 - Ending — Focus on an action that needs to take place.
5. Students will respond to editor's memo by writing a business memo on the status of their project.

Extension/Enrichment Activity:

As students are creating advertisements for *Travel Magazine*, have them write a business memo to the company CEO explaining their concept to sell the product and reporting on progress. (See Lesson 4.)

Assessment Methods:

The business memo should contain the following requirements:

- _____ Complete heading (date, the recipient, the writer, and subject are stated clearly).
- _____ Reason for writing memo — "What is your point?"
- _____ Full and detailed explanation of the status of your travel magazine article.
- _____ If necessary, identify action that needs to be taken. If not, just end politely.
- _____ Details are organized.
- _____ Correct memo style conventions.

◆ Online Resources

Encarta Encyclopedia — Microsoft Corp. (CD-ROM).

Full Circle with Michael Palin — videocassettes.

PBS Home Video, 1998 (10 hours).

CIA Interactive World Factbook —

http://theodora.com/wfb/abc_world_fact_book.html

Ask Jeeves for Kids — <http://www.ajkids.com>

Flags of All Countries —

<http://www.theodora.com/flags/flags.html>

How Far Is It? — <http://www.indo.com/cgi-bin.dist>

Yahoo Weather Forecast — <http://weather.yahoo.com/>

Asiaweek.com — <http://cnn.com/ASIANOW/asiaweek/>

List of search engines — <http://www.kcls.org>

The World and I: Worldwide Folktales

(CD-ROM) www.Worlddandi.com, 2001

Sample Business Memo

Date: December 3, 2001
To: Freelance Writers/Photojournalists
From: Ms. Plowman, Editor
Subject: Pacific Rim Countries Travel Magazine Project

I have just met with members of the board of *Travel Magazine, Inc.* They were very excited to hear about our new Pacific Rim project. I would like to know the following things in regard to the status of your assignment:

1. What research have you acquired regarding your country? What are your sources?
2. Are you having any trouble finding answers to any of the research questions?
3. What is the status of your written article?
4. Have you found photos to accompany your article? (Be sure to include the source of the photo.)
5. Have you found any companies interested in advertisement space in magazine?

I will be meeting with the board again next Monday. Please have your updates to me by Friday. If you are having any difficulties finding information, please let me know. Enjoy your travels!

► Lesson 3: Book Review

Lesson Objectives:

Students will learn more about the country they are studying by reading a novel with a setting in that country. Students will then write a book review to submit to the travel magazine.

Time Allotment: 3 weeks

Assign book to be read for homework. Allow 2 weeks for reading and 1 week to write the review.

Resources Needed:

Write Source 2000, A Guide to Writing, Thinking, and Learning

Novel with a setting in country you are studying.

Sample book reviews from Sunday newspaper

Lesson Activities:

1. Present the idea that the owners of *Travel Magazine, Inc.* want this magazine to be different. They want to introduce the reader to a country in new and unique ways. One way is through literature. The owners feel that you can learn a lot about a country and its culture by reading folk tales and other literature. Therefore, the magazine's editor would like you to choose a book, either a folk tale or other piece of literature, in which the story is set in the country you are studying. Write a review.
2. Discuss with students the concept that writing a review is one way to express thoughts and feelings about a piece of literature. In a review, the writer presents opinions about the work and gives details from the text to support opinions. Ideas for reviews usually come from the main elements of literature — plot, characterization, setting, and theme.
3. Have students work in groups to read sample book reviews and answer the following questions: In the beginning, how does the writer gain the reader's attention? What paragraph mentions the title and author? What is the main point or subject of the review? Does the review include examples or ideas from the reading? Does the reviewer suggest the outcome, but not give away the ending?
4. Model how to organize a four-paragraph book review. *Beginning:* Grabs the reader's attention, gives the book's title and author, and states the subject. *Middle:* Gives specific examples from the novel to support the focus. *Ending:* Summarizes the main points or helps readers understand the significance of the reviewer's opinion or main point. The reviewer suggests the outcome, but does not give it away.

Extension/Enrichment Activity:

Have students collect artifacts representing ideas, events, characters, themes, and objects significant to the culture described in the book. Prepare a display of these items. Label each artifact and briefly write about its importance to the book. Students may also want to include a quote from the book to accompany each artifact.

Assessment Methods:

Use the six-trait model to assess the book review. Students should make sure that the review includes the following:

- _____ An opening that grabs the reader's attention.
- _____ Mention of the title and author in first paragraph.
- _____ A clear focus of the review.
- _____ Details from the text to support focus.
- _____ A closing paragraph that summarizes main points of review.

► Lesson 4: Advertisement

Lesson Objectives:

Students will design a print ad to be included in their magazine article. Through this activity, students can learn more about products sold in their country of interest. They can also become aware of the persuasive power of visual symbols, catchwords, and catch phrases.

Time Allotment: 2–3 hours

Resources Needed:

An assortment of magazines for students

Access to research books

Material World: A Global Family Portrait by Peter Mendel (see bibliography)

Persuasive Writing by Tara McCarthy (see bibliography)

Lesson Activities:

1. Ask students to quickly brainstorm what comes to mind when they think of print advertisements. What techniques do companies use to persuade you to buy their product?
2. Pass out magazines. Have students look at different advertisements in magazines and list techniques used in ads to persuade readers.
3. Have class share results. As students share, point out the following techniques:
 - *Get on the Bandwagon* — Advertisement uses phrases that get the reader to think “everyone who’s smart and hip knows this or is doing this.”
 - *Testimonials: The Famous-People Technique* — Advertisement uses a famous spokesperson to “testify” to the greatness of a product.
 - *Glittering Generalities* — Advertisement uses vague words or phrases that have a feel-good quality to it (e.g., better, more powerful, new, improved)
 - *Transfer: Pictures and Slogans That Persuade* — Advertisement uses strong pictorial symbols or general phrases that arouse the readers’ emotions so that they will connect and transfer the emotion to the product being sold.
4. Assign students to design a print advertisement using one of the techniques above for a product that would be sold in the country they are studying. Discuss the role that culture plays in advertising and encourage students to be culturally appropriate. (Guidance will be necessary, as students may have limited understanding about cultural differences.)
5. Brainstorm with students ways to find products sold in the country they are studying. I would introduce the book, *Material World: A Global Family Portrait* by Peter Mendel, which gives a pictorial account of the material goods of an average family in many different countries throughout the world.
6. Pick a country that students are not studying and model how you can go about choosing a product for the advertisement. As a class, decide what technique would be the most persuasive to use in the advertisement. Discuss with students what they want to keep in mind — Who is the audience? If the ad lists the price, it must be in the correct currency, etc.

Enrichment/Extension Activity:

Have students create a commercial for the product they are trying to sell. Students may publish their ads by showing them as dialogue balloons set in picture panels, or students can work in groups to act out and videotape a commercial.

Assessment Methods:

Advertisements should include the following requirements:

- _____ Student chooses a product that would be sold in country being studied.
- _____ Student uses at least one of the persuasive techniques (Get on the Bandwagon, Testimonials, Glittering Generalities, or Transfers: Pictures and Slogans that Persuade.)
- _____ Advertisement has eye-appeal.
- _____ Advertisement is original.
- _____ Advertisement is culturally appropriate.

Advertisements will be graded on a 4-point scale.

Scoring Rubric:

- 4 Exceeded expectations — Student has completed more than the required elements and has presented project in a unique way.
- 3 Meets expectations — Student has completed all the required elements.
- 2 Below expectations — Student has completed most of the required elements; however, there are some that are either missing or could have been improved.
- 1 Significantly below grade level expectations — Student completed very few required elements.

~ Travel Magazine Resources ~

◆ Books for Students

Australia

- Hill, Anthony. *The Burnt Stick*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.
- Lester, Alison. *The Quicksand Pony*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.
- Kidd, Diana. *Onion Tears*. New York: Orchard Books, 1991.

Cambodia

- Ho, Minfong. *The Clay Marble*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1991.

China

- Fang, Linda. *The Chi-Lin Purse: A Collection of Ancient Chinese Stories*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1995.
- Fritz, Jean. *Homesick: My Own Story*. New York: Putnam, 1982.
- Jian, Ji Li. *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution*. New York: HarperCollins, 1997.
- Yen Mah, Adeline. *Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1999.

Indonesia

- Gelman, Rita Golden. *Rice is Life*. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2000. (picture book)

Japan

- Gold, Alison Leslie. *A Special Fate — Chiune Sugihara: Hero of the Holocaust*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2000.
- Hoobler, Dorothy and Thomas. *Ghost at the Tokaido Inn*. New York: Philomel Books, 1999.
- Hoobler, Dorothy and Thomas. *Demon in the Teahouse*. New York: Philomel Books, 2001.
- Watkins, Yoko Kawashima. *So Far From the Bamboo Grove*. New York: Beechtree Books, 1994.

Korea

- Choi, Sook Nyul. *Year of Impossible Goodbyes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991.
- McMahon, Patricia. *Chi-Hoon: A Korean Girl*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 1998.

New Zealand

- Beck, Katie. *The Moas*. Kansas City, MO: Landmark Editing, Inc., 1999

Philippines

- DeLa Paz, Myrna J. *Abadeha: The Philippine Cinderella*. Los Angeles: Pacific Queen Communications, 1991. (picture book)

Thailand

- Ho, Minfong. *Rice Without Rain*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1990.
- Read, Margaret. *The Girl Who Wore Too Much: A Folk Tale From Thailand*. Little Rock, AR: August House Littlefolk, 1998.

Vietnam

- Huynh, Quang Hnuong. *The Land I Lost: Adventures of a Boy in Vietnam*. New York: Harper & Row, 1982.
- Whelan, Gloria. *Goodbye, Vietnam*. New York: Knopf, 1992.

◆ Books for Teachers

- Goodman, Jim. *Cultures of the World: Thailand*. New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 1994.
(Also available in *Cultures of the World Series*: Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Cambodia, China, Papua New Guinea, Vietnam, Laos.)
- Lim, Robin. *Indonesia* (Globe-Trotters Club series). Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 2001.
(Available in series: China, Japan, Philippines, Vietnam.)
- McCarthy, Tara. *Persuasive Writing*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1998.
- McCarthy, Tara. *Narrative Writing*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1998.
- Menzel, Peter. *Material World: A Global Family Portrait*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994.
- Schlick Noe; Johnson, Katherine L.; Johnson, Nancy J. *Getting Started With Literature Circles*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc., 1999.
- Sebranek, Patrick; Kemper, Dave; Meyer, Verne. *Write Source 2000: A Guide to Writing, Thinking, and Learning*. Wilmington, MA: Great Source Education Group, Inc., 1999.

Teaching World Geography Through Literature: A Novel Approach to the World



Karen Adair

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Introduction

Along with many other teachers in the state of Washington, I share a passion for teaching social studies and helping young people learn about and understand their world. Because of this, I have been concerned that the teaching of social studies at the elementary and middle school levels seems to have been eclipsed by the growing emphasis on raising reading, writing, and math scores on the state assessment tests. An outstanding elementary teacher, involved in statewide teacher training, recently confided to me that few teachers in her building “do social studies” now. Teachers in my own department have discussed the difficulty of adequately covering social studies content in our daily 80-minute language arts/social studies block. Yet, as I work on this document in September and October 2001, world events show an even greater need for our students to have this knowledge.

In the 1980s the National Geographic Society, also concerned about the lack of emphasis on the teaching of geography, embarked on a major educational initiative. It set up Geographic Alliances in each state and funded annual teacher-training institutes. Many Washington State teachers have earned the status of “teacher consultant” as a result of their training with the Washington Geographic Alliance (WAGA). After my WAGA Summer Institute training in 1998, I began to adapt strategies for using young adult literature to teach about U.S. geography in my eighth-grade language arts/social studies classes. In 1999 I found myself also teaching a sixth-grade language arts/social studies class, and I found novels to be an ideal way for my class to embark upon an exploration of the world.

Literature offers a valuable resource to teach basic concepts of geography. Most books have a setting that can be examined and analyzed. Literature brings the culture of another country to life, encouraging empathy for others. The author of an ERIC Digest on this topic found that “several advocates of a literature-based approach to geography argue that students are more likely to understand geographical concepts if they have real people and situations to use as models” (Hume). The authors of another journal article “are convinced that children can not only learn the basic concepts of social studies through their fictional reading, but that they will probably better retain such concepts when they are reinforced through fictional media of appeal to them” (Friend and Thompson). For teachers concerned about reading scores, other authors believe that both literacy and geography are improved through the use of literature in the social studies classroom. Literature is more motivating to students than a textbook, offering richer content and allowing for better discussions and high-level thinking about topics. Combining literature and geography allows teachers the chance to cover language arts and social studies Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs).

According to Friend and Thompson, there is a “vast wealth of well-written children’s literature . . . set in areas of the world currently studied in the middle school social studies class.” In choosing books to use for the classroom, the following criteria should be considered. First, of course, is the readability of the book. (Publishers’ catalogs or web sites offer information about reading level.) Your own prereading of the book will tell you about its literary qualities: Is it worth reading? Is it well written? Will it appeal to students? Second, as you read the book, look for geographic concepts. Every story has a setting that can

be expressed in geographic terms. What are the physical and cultural elements that influence the lives of the characters? Third, consider the accuracy of the content. It helps if the author has lived in the place. Many resources can aid your search for highly recommended books. The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) and the Children's Book Council nominate outstanding books published each year. Another good source is the annual Carter G. Woodson award list. These lists are published each spring in *Social Education*, the journal of NCSS.

It may seem overwhelming to read, select, and plan geography activities to go with a variety of books. Many studies show that many K-8 teachers do not feel as prepared to teach geography as they are for reading or math. Here is the basic strategy that I have used: First, I teach the students how to use the five themes of geography as a framework for understanding the world. I have found that an easy way to teach or review these themes is by showing a video from the National Geographic Society entitled *Five Themes for Planet Earth*. See themes listed on the following page. To borrow this video, contact a teacher in your district who has received training from WAGA or check with the National Geographic Society. Videos about the five themes of geography are also available from Social Studies School Service (www.socialstudies.com).

But knowing the five themes is not enough; they are a framework to be applied to understanding geography. So we practice, reinforce, and review these themes by discussing what we read. The five themes provide a framework for analyzing literature, developing discussions about geographic content, and providing follow-up activities to reinforce geographic concepts.

At the beginning of the year, I model this kind of geographic analysis as I read aloud to the class. Students listen for details that would give information about location, place, movement, interaction, or regions for the chosen setting. We fill in a chart that I post in the front of the room. (Examples of similar charts appear at the end of each of the following lesson plans.) Later, as students are more confident about finding and discussing these details, geography activities can be part of a novel the whole class reads together, or can be incorporated in literature circles or the reading workshop approach (individual self-selected reading). These activities can even be applied to stories that appear in your district's adopted reading series if you are short of books and funds.

I have used novels to introduce a unit about a country or region of the world, then students have done further research about topics in the book. Another simple but effective approach is to keep globes, world maps, and atlases ready to refer to as you read. Pinpoint locations and follow the routes that appear in the plot of novels. During the school year update a bulletin board with locations of all reading selections flagged on the map.

The list of "Geographic Questions to Ask about a Book" on page 45 will help this process. Finally, the lessons that follow offer suggestions on how to teach geography using novels.

~ The Five Themes of Geography ~

Geographic Questions to Ask about a Book

Location:

Where is it?

1. Where does the story take place (city, country, continent, longitude, latitude, relative to other places, distance from another place, etc.)?
2. What is the absolute location? (Absolute location tells exactly where it is, perhaps using latitude and longitude or a street address.)
3. What is the relative location? (Where is it in relation to other places? What is to the north, south, east, and west? How far is it from where we are? What landmarks is it near?)
4. Why does the story take place in this location?

Place:

This theme is usually the easiest to identify. Place includes the unique physical and human characteristics that set one place apart from another. Authors develop the setting through descriptive passages and illustrations.

1. What is this place like?
2. What are the physical features of the setting? (What does the land look like? What's the climate?)
3. What makes it different from other places?
4. What are some of the features of the land that humans have created?
5. What are some characteristics of the people and their culture (traditions, customs, etc.)?

Human–Environment Interaction:

How do people interact with their environment?

1. How do they depend on their environment?
2. How have people adapted to the environment?
3. How have people changed their environment to better suit their needs?
4. Where do most people live?

Movement:

What patterns of movement of people, goods, and ideas do you notice?

1. How did people move from place to place in the book? (What are the major modes of transportation?)
2. Where did they move to or from? Why?
3. How do people communicate?
4. How and where were goods (materials like food, crops, supplies) moved? Why?
5. What are the area's major exports and imports?

Regions:

Different areas of the world or a country share similar physical and/or human characteristics.

1. What are the natural regions? (deserts, mountains, coastal areas, plateaus)
2. What are the political regions? (states, provinces, countries, etc.)
3. What are the main languages and where are they located?
4. What are the regions of vegetation? (marshland, grassland, forest, etc.)

► Lesson 1: *The Clay Marble* by Minfong Ho (Cambodia)

Themes/Skills:

One of my eighth-grade students introduced me to this book when she chose it as the most significant book she had ever read. The action takes place along the border of Cambodia and Thailand, first in a refugee camp and then in a military camp during the civil war of the 1980s. A young girl, her mother, and older brother flee the bombings that have devastated their farming village. They head toward the safety and food supplies available at the refugee camp. Having experienced the loss of family members, friends, and home, Dara gains confidence and learns how to hold on to the memories of people and places she loves.

Lesson Objectives:

1. Read and discuss *The Clay Marble* by Minfong Ho.
2. Locate Cambodia on maps of world, Asia, and Southeast Asia.
3. Apply the framework of the five themes of geography to understand, organize, and analyze information about the geography of Cambodia.
4. Place events of recent Cambodian history chronologically on a timeline.
5. Discuss how these events changed the traditional way of life for families in Cambodia.
6. Write about an object that has given you confidence to deal with difficult situations.

Time Allotment: About 2 weeks

Resources Needed:

Copies of *The Clay Marble* by Minfong Ho (ideally, a copy for each student, but this lesson could be adapted to use as a read-aloud); large wall maps of the world, Asia, Southeast Asia; student atlases, outline maps of Southeast Asia for students to label.

Lesson Activities:

1. Explain to students that they will be reading a book about a certain area of the world. Read the first chapter aloud to them while students listen carefully for clues about the country's identity. After reading, discuss the information they used to identify the country. Encourage them to categorize these clues into a chart showing the five themes of geography (see page 48).
2. Have students draw a quick mental map of Cambodia's location. Compare their maps with the location of Cambodia on maps of the world, Eastern Hemisphere, Asia, and Southeast Asia. Spend some time creating accurate maps showing Cambodia's location (neighboring countries, surrounding bodies of water). Prominently display maps of the world, Asia, and Southeast Asia, with small flags showing the location of Cambodia.
3. Read the book as a whole class assignment, in literature circles, or as a read-aloud. As students read the story, they should watch for facts that tell about the five themes of geography. They can fill in a chart (as on page 48), then contribute to a large chart on a bulletin board that the whole class discusses.
4. Have the students create a map of the story by showing where the events take place: the border, their village, refugee camp, military base camp. Students should draw routes to show the family's journey through these areas, and then back home. Compare and contrast the three main locations of the story (village, refugee camp, military base).

5. Help students understand the causes and effects of the war in Cambodia by placing the events in order on a timeline. Then discuss how these events changed the lives of members of Dara's family and other families in the book. Discuss the significance of the miniature village of clay that the girls in the story create. (It shows the traditional life of the countryside before the disruption of war; ironically, it also is destroyed.) What do we learn about the physical and human characteristics of traditional village life from this "village of clay?"
6. Students will write about an object that has meant a great deal to them, and then compare this object to the clay marble that gave Dara confidence to deal with her situation.

Extension/Enrichment:

1. Students can use the library, electronic encyclopedia, or the Internet to search for up-to-date information about Cambodia. Encourage students to report on findings and share photographs they find showing life in Cambodia today.
2. Investigate this question: Are there refugee camps in Cambodia today? Are there refugee camps in other places in the world today? How do they compare to the experience of Dara and her family on the Border of Cambodia and Thailand in the 1980s?
3. Have students find a recipe for and make fried banana fritters (page 108 of the book).
4. Preview, then show pertinent parts of the following videos: *Raising the Bamboo Curtain: Burma/Cambodia/Vietnam*, by director Ricky Ray, 1994 (a travel documentary with footage on Khmer culture and Angkor Wat), *In the Shadow of Angkor Wat*, by director Robert Gardner, 1997.
5. Students could read and review *Dara's Cambodia New Year* by Sothea Chemruom (appropriate for grades 3–8) to learn about Cambodian New Year traditions.
6. Have students research the "Killing Fields" and the atrocities that occurred during this period. How did these events contribute to the number of refugees in Cambodia?

Assessment:

1. Agree on the important locations and physical features that everyone should know for a map test on Cambodia and Southeast Asia. Students can help each other review and study for the test.
2. Students will be able to fill in a chart listing three facts about each of the five themes of geography as they apply to Cambodia.
3. For a self-evaluation, students will write a learning log entry reflecting on what they learned about Cambodia by reading *The Clay Marble*.

The Five Themes of Geography

Example from:

The Clay Marble by Minfong Ho

◆ Location

Southeast Asia
Cambodia
Border between Cambodia and Thailand
Nongchan Refugee Camp
Village of Siem Reap
Military base camp east of Nongchan:
about 3 miles through the forest

◆ Place

Cambodia in 1980s: farming villages disrupted by war; bombings cause misery and death, destroy families and crops; hunger results
Bamboo groves/thick forests of teak and other trees
Monsoons
Crops: rice, vegetables, mangoes, bananas
Fish from Tonle Sap Lake
Ancient stone temples of Angkor
Refugee camp: makeshift shelters, lines for food, crowded, scrub land
Religion: Buddhism

◆ Movement

Oxcarts
Rusty bicycles
Roads and small paths through the forest
Trucks: bring supplies to camps and transport soldiers
Bamboo shoulder poles for hauling goods
Planes bring bombs
Armies move between countries across the border
Ideas spread by word of mouth and army indoctrination

◆ Interaction

Animals used to pull loads, plow fields (oxen, water buffalo).
Land cleared for farming or to provide fuel, shelter
People depend on fish and rice for food
Water from wells
Uses of bamboo: poles to carry loads, fencing, and building material

◆ Region

Southeast Asia as a region in world and Asia
Cambodia and other nations of Southeast Asia
“The Border” as a region in the war
Refugee camp compared to original village built in clay
Refugee camp compared to military camp
Land use areas: farming, forest

Resources for Further Study:

SPICE (Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education) has several lessons or curriculum units that could be used for further exploration of Asia:

- “The Vietnamese Refugee Experience” is an individual lesson plan in which students examine lives and experiences of Vietnamese refugees in the United States. It is written for high school students, but could be adapted for middle school use. Visit the SPICE web site: <http://spice.Stanford.edu/lp/Vietnam/Index/html>
- *Feeding a Hungry World: Focus on Rice in Asia and the Pacific* is a curriculum unit that teaches about the diversity of rice cultures and farming systems in Asia and the Pacific. For information about ordering, visit the SPICE web site, or contact: SPICE Institute for International Studies, Littlefield Center, Room 14, Stanford University, 300 Lasuen Street, Stanford, CA 94305-5013 (Tel: 415-723-1114)
- *Mapping Asia*, a curriculum unit for grades 6–12 introduces students to the physical and political features of Asia (see above addresses).

Asia for Kids is a good source for books and materials about Asian countries for both students and elementary teachers. A catalog is available from: Asia for Kids Catalog, Master Communications, Inc., 4480 Lake Forest Dr., Suite 302, Cincinnati, OH 45242-3726 (Tel: 513-563-3100) or online at www.asiaforkids.com. The current catalog lists a teacher activity book for grades 5–9 called *Hands-on Culture of Southeast Asia*, a book/CD set called *Silent Temples, Songful Hearts: Traditional Music of Cambodia*, and a book about the traditional Cambodia dancers, *In My Heart I am a Dancer*, by Chamroeun Yin; suitable for ages 8–12.

► Lesson 2: *Kiss the Dust* by Elizabeth Laird (Iraq)

Themes/Skills:

At first, Tara Howrami, a 13-year-old schoolgirl in the town of Sulaimaniya, Iraq, believes that her life is barely touched by the war raging between her country and Iran in the 1980s. But her father's political activities for Kurdish rebels soon cause her family to flee to their ancestral home in mountainous Kurdistan, and then to become political refugees crossing the border into Iran. Life in Iran offers the hardship of refugee camps and more political dangers; the family finally flees to England. This book introduces the geography of the Middle East, personalizes a distant war, and gives students the chance to examine the refugee experience. In an interview (<http://achuka.com/elint.htm>), the author explains why she wrote this story: "We can easily become complacent about the horrors of war, but it's ever present in the world, and millions of people are killed and made refugees every year. We see the victims on our TV screens, and somehow we glaze over. We find it hard to see them as real people, individuals, trying to survive in the face of terrible odds. I wanted to write about a modern war, to bring to life a story of our own times."

Lesson Objectives:

- Read a novel about the life of a young girl in Iraq and Kurdistan.
- Write about similar experiences in students' own lives.
- Locate countries, capitals, and important geographic locations of the Middle Eastern countries.
- Learn about different cultures within one region of the Middle East.
- Work cooperatively as a group to learn about the geography of one of the regions in the book.
- Use the five themes of geography as a framework for a group presentation to the class.

Time Allotment: 2–3 weeks

Resources Needed:

Copies of *Kiss the Dust* by Elizabeth Laird (Puffin Books, 1991) for all students; chart paper; wall maps of the world and the Middle East; student atlases; outline maps of the world and the Middle East for students to label; large tag board for posters.

Lesson Activities:

1. Before reading the book, begin a K-W-L chart (know, want to know, learn) with students to assess their knowledge about the location of Iran, Iraq, and Kurdistan and other facts about these places. K-W-L is a three-step strategy to help students construct meaning. At the beginning of a unit, students list what they think they know about the topic in one column on a chart. In a second column on the chart, students list what they think they want to learn or will find out. At the end of the unit, students fill in a third column on the chart showing what they learned about the topic.
(Marzano, Robert J; Pickering, Debra J. *Dimensions of Learning*. Alexandria, VA: Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory, 1997, pp 54–55.)
2. While reading the book, discuss locations mentioned and locate them on world maps (use wall maps and atlases). Students will place the following locations on blank maps of the world and Middle East:
Countries: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey, Armenia, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan
Cities: Baghdad, Sulaimaniya, Tehran, Damascus, Ankara, Yerevan
Bodies of Water: Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Persian Gulf, and Mediterranean Sea
Mountains: Zagros Mountains
3. Students will investigate the location and history of the Kurds by looking at the web sites listed here, or other information sources. They will share information learned and shade Kurdistan on their maps.

www.uwinnipeg.ca/~rvakili/Kurdistan.html
www.cool.mb.ca/%7Ekakel/kurds.html

www.start.at/kurdistan
www.akakurdistan.com/kurds/timeline.html

4. When the class has finished reading the book, divide students into six groups. Assign each group one of the following locations in the story: Sulaimaniya, the village in Kurdistan; Iran, Tehran; and London. The groups will create a poster-sized graphic organizer that shows the geography of that location through the framework of the five themes of geography. When finished, each group plans, practices, and gives an oral presentation of its work to the class. (If the class has access to a computer lab, students could create Power Point presentations instead of posters.)
5. Discuss together how Tara's life changed as the family moved to each new location. As a girl, what was expected of her? How does that compare and contrast to expectations for girls in our culture?
6. Discuss these terms from the story: pilau, samovar, chador, mosque, mullah.
7. Have students think about, discuss, then write about the following topics:
 - a. When the family had to flee quickly, Tara's mother carried her beloved samovar from Sulaimaniya into the mountains by taxi, and then over the mountains into Iran by horse. What is one possession that you have that you would want to take with you if your family had to face a similar journey. Describe the possession and tell why it is so important to you.
 - b. As her family moved from location to location, Tara found herself adapting and changing. Describe a time when an event or a move changed your life. Compare your experiences with Tara's.
8. Revisit the original K-W-L chart. Look at the K and W columns and discuss or correct information. Fill in the "Learned" column and discuss.

Extension/Enrichment:

1. Read an interview with the author, Elizabeth Laird, at <http://achuka.com/elint.htm> and then read another of her books.
2. Invite speakers to come to the class to speak on any of the following topics: women's roles in Middle Eastern countries, refugees around the world, or life in the Middle East. Have students work in groups to compose questions beforehand.
3. Explore the refugee experience around the world. Use the brochure *Refugee Teenagers*, published in 1999; a simulation game called *Passages*, designed to help young people understand the experiences and problems faced by refugees; and videos *To Be a Refugee* (ages 8–12) and *To Feel at Home* (ages 14–18). Have students imagine what it would be like to be a refugee and compose a journal about this experience. *Source*: UNHCR, Public Information Section, CP 2500, 1211 Geneva 2 Depot, Switzerland.
4. View a video: *Young Voices from the Arab World: The Lives and Times of Five Teenagers* (Cine, 1998). Five teenagers representing Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Kuwait, and Morocco introduce Arab culture and society by showing us their homes, families, schools, and other aspects of their lives.
5. See the Briefing Paper on Refugees at www.un.org/CyberschoolBus. Use the links provided to find details about the operations of a current refugee camp.

Assessment:

1. Student self-evaluation and teacher evaluation of group participation, poster, and presentation
2. Teacher assessment of learning about Iraq, Iran, and Kurdistan (based on discussion, K-W-L chart)
3. Student learning log entry on what has been learned about this area of the world
4. Map test of places studied in lesson

Resources for Further Study:

A Hand Full of Stars by Rafik Schami is another young adult novel about the Middle East, written in the form of a journal kept by a teenage boy in Damascus who wants to become a journalist. He records the suppression of the Syrian government. This book would be suitable for mature readers.

The Five Themes of Geography

Example from:

Kiss the Dust

by Elizabeth Laird

◆ Location

Middle East
Iraq
Sulaimaniya
Baghdad
Kurdistan
Iran
London

◆ Place

Iraq: icy cold winter, blasting summer heat;
Ordinary life at first (school, shopping, teahouse, homework,
TV, family) but signs of war and political repression;
Predominant Arab culture with Kurdish minority

Islamic Culture: mosque, Mullah, women with veils, visiting
men never got past sitting room, grandmother's traditional
beliefs about education for girls

Kurd village: hard labor, farming, raising goats, chickens,
cows; visitors sat on floor, men away at war; mountainous,
no electricity, traditional Kurdish clothing, girls marry young,
bombings

Iran: Persian; strict rules about women's clothes

◆ Movement

Iraq: bus, car, taxi,
army vehicles;
TV news, radio, telephone;
Kurdistan rebels moved about
in clandestine manner.

Kurdistan: winding mountain
roads, mules carry loads,
horses, and jet fighters

◆ Interaction

Iraq: city life depended on modern
conveniences such as air conditioning,
appliances, etc.

Village Life: no electricity, used
firewood for heating and cooking, water
came from well, houses built from stone.

Mountains created "a natural fortress"
for the Kurds and provided building
material for houses. Caves offered
shelter. Kurds farmed the land for food,
raising livestock. Mountains also a
natural border between Iran and Iraq.

◆ Region

Arab World
Middle East
Nations: Iran, Iraq
Traditional cultural region of
Kurdistan
City vs. village
Mountains vs. vast plains
Refugee camps
Differences between Middle East
and England

► Lesson 3: *The Secret of the Andes* by Ann Nolan Clark (Peru)

Theme/Skills:

The Secret of the Andes, the Newbery Award winner for 1953, is an enduring classic. Ann Nolan Clark, a writer and educator in Indian schools of the southwestern United States, traveled throughout Latin America training teachers from 1945 to 1950. This book inspired is by her experience in Peru, presents the life of a 12-year-old highland shepherd who embarks on a journey to discover his identity. According to the publisher, the book is appropriate for ages 9 through 12, but browsing the web, I discovered comments by teachers who had used it successfully in fourth through eighth-grade classrooms. The poetic language offers vivid descriptions, making it an ideal book to introduce the geography of Peru by using the five themes framework. Without a focused activity, student interest might lag during the descriptive parts, so the following activities will help them appreciate the beauty of the author's language and the spectacular scenery captured on these pages. Combining this classic book about the traditional life of the Andes with research projects based on Internet web pages will bring this book to life for students.

Lesson Objectives:

1. Use nonfiction, library resources, computer software, and online sites to find information about Peru.
2. Read a novel about Peru.
3. Analyze the author's use of descriptive language.
4. Search the novel for information about the geography of Peru by using the five themes of geography as a framework.
5. Write a description of a location in Peru.
6. Write an essay about the theme of interaction.

Time Allotment: 2–3 weeks

Resources Needed:

Copies of *The Secret of the Andes* by Ann Nolan Clark, which is still in print; wall map of the world; wall map of South America; outline maps for students to label; reference books and nonfiction books about the Inca; access to the Internet.

Lesson Activities:

1. Activate prior knowledge by discussing as a class what students know about civilization of the Inca and the Conquest. If necessary, fill in gaps by assigning short selections from textbook, encyclopedia, or trade books.
2. Have students search web sites for maps, photographs (Andes, Quechua people, llamas, Cuzco, and Lima), and music from Peru. As a class compile these images and sounds into a PowerPoint presentation that can be used to accompany the reading of the book. (See the web sites listed in the bibliography.) As an alternative, find photographs in library books, play a CD of music from the Andes, and do some preliminary map work showing Peru in relation to other South American countries, and major locations in Peru.
3. Read the book, accompanied by images and music to set the mood.
4. As they are reading, ask the students to collect powerful descriptions of the themes of location, place, interaction, movement, and region. Share these descriptions after each reading session. Have students save these quotations, and when they have finished the book, choose one quotation to use as the basis of an artwork they create about the story.

5. When the students finish the book, they can list all the places that were major settings for the action. They can then skim the book to find and then discuss how Cusi reacted to each of these places. Have students select one of the places, then compose an imaginary postcard that Cusi might write home describing that place. (High mountain valley, jungle, Spanish haciendas, salt pits, Cuzco)
6. Have students fill out a “five themes of geography” chart (similar to page 54) and discuss. Their charts should include maps showing the location of Peru in the world and in South America. This book gives especially good examples of the themes of place and interaction.
7. Have students write an essay in which they compare and contrast how they interact with their environment with how Cusi interacted with his environment. Encourage the students to include descriptive passages.

Extension/Enrichment:

1. Students can conduct research using the school library and online resources to learn more about Peru and life in the Andes. Findings can be presented to the class in the form of a first-person journal written by an American tourist to Peru. Have the students compare their own accounts with Ann Nolan Clark’s writing.
2. Students can do research and report on other South American/Central American countries.
3. *Mapping Latin America*, a curriculum published by SPICE, offers an orientation to the geography of the regions. (SPICE is the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education, Littlefield Center, Room 14, Stanford University, 300 Lasuen Street, Stanford, CA 94305-5013; telephone: 415-723-1114; web site: <http://spice.Stanford.edu>)

Assessment:

1. Teacher observation of student participation in reading, discussing, and illustrating the story.
2. Student self-evaluation of their postcards and essays using rubric for details, organization, voice, conventions, word choice, sentence fluency.
3. Teacher evaluation of five themes of geography chart completed by each student.
4. Have students create, study for, and take a map test on important locations, land, and water features of Peru and South America.

Resources for Further Study:

Scholastic’s web site offers a lesson plan for a WebQuest entitled “Culture of the Inca.” (<http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/results/view>)

Web Sites (current as of January 2002):

Cultures of the Andes — www.andes.org/graphic/ada_chur.html (photos of llamas, people, villages, Cuzco church; music; Quechua language lessons, stories of life in the Andes).
 Peru Travel Gateway — www.peru-explorer.com/peru.htm
 Destination: Peru — www.destination360.com/lostcities.htm (360-degree tour of Peru; also can be viewed as still photos).
 Qosqo: Inca’s Sacred Capital — <http://users.bestweb.net/~goyzueta/quosqo>
 Lonely Planet: — www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/south_america/peru/
 The Inca Trail and Machu Picchu — www.raingod.com/angus/Gallery/Photos/SouthAmerica/Peru/IncaTrail/index.html (a virtual trip along the Inca Trail)
 CuzcoGuide.Com — www.cuzcoguide.com/index.htm
 South America Explorers Club — www.szexplorers.org/pesearch.htm

The Five Themes of Geography

Example from:
Secret of the Andes
by Ann Nolan Clark

◆ Location

South America
Peru
Andes Mountains
“Hidden Valley”
Regions of Peru
Ancient cities of the Inca

◆ Place

High altitude; cold climate
Mountains and highland valleys
Traces of ancient Inca; Quechua language; Cuzco
Llamas grazing on ychu grass in highland meadows
Isolation of “Hidden Valley”
Condors
Indian and Spanish cultures
Differences between life of highland herders, Spanish towns
closer to coast, and Cuzco
Cuzco: old stone buildings, busy market

◆ Movement

Rocky trails in mountains,
llama trails
Walk to market to trade goods
by bartering.
Llamas carry loads.
Swinging bridge
Wandering minstrels pass along
news from outside world
to isolated areas.
Evidence of modernization:
truck
Spanish area: cobblestone
roads, burros, oxen,
plowed fields

◆ Interaction

Adaptation to high altitude
Llamas graze in high meadows, carry
loads along rocky trails.
Llama wool spun, used for warm
clothing; traded for food
Gourds used for cooking and storage
containers
Herders sleep with llamas for warmth,
company.
Used available materials for building:
stone for corral walls; weave grass
for mats to sleep on, ropes; sandals
made from llama hide; used llama
dung for fuel; medicine came from
wild plants

◆ Region

South America
Peru
Andes highland, coastal plain,
Amazon jungle basin
Cities vs. farming villages and
isolated mountain areas
Cultural/linguistic areas: Spanish
and Indian.
Ancient Inca Kingdom

► Lesson 4: *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* by Elizabeth Foreman Lewis (China)

Themes/Skills:

This book is another classic that deserves attention in the social studies classroom, especially since it takes place in Seattle's sister city of Chongqing. Fourteen-year-old Young Fu and his mother, Fu Be Be, arrive in Chungking (an earlier spelling) from the countryside to begin a new life after the death of Young Fu's father. Amazed at the "ceaseless bustle of the streets," Young Fu eagerly explores and adapts to his new home. In the China of the 1920s, bandits are a constant threat inside and outside the city walls. Soldiers, rather than providing safety, are another threat to the population, while warlords seize and control territory throughout China. As an apprentice to a strict, but kind, coppersmith, Young Fu encounters dangers, misfortunes, and temptations. Fortune smiles on him in his struggles to become more than a country bumpkin, more than a lowly errand boy. But what is fortune without wisdom? Helped by the patience and advice of three people — his mother, a scholar, and the coppersmith — Young Fu overcomes adversity and becomes a man. The Newbery Award Medal Winner for 1933, this book offers an opportunity to examine traditional Chinese life in the early part of the 20th century, before World War II and establishment of the People's Republic of China. A section of notes at the end of the book, added for the 1970s edition, is now also dated; students should be given the opportunity to see how China has modernized since the 1920s and the 1970s. The book has a reading level of between sixth and seventh grade.

Lesson Objectives:

1. Read a novel to learn about China's history and geography.
2. Use the five themes of geography as a framework for organizing information about China's geography.
3. Be able to locate China on maps of the world; locate important Chinese cities and rivers on maps of China.
4. Use latitude and longitude to find locations and predict climate.
5. Write a skit to explain the meaning of an ancient saying.
6. Write a sequel to the book, predicting Young Fu's future.

Time Allotment: 2–3 weeks

Resources Needed: Copies of *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* by Elizabeth Foreman Lewis; globe; wall maps of the world, Asia, and China; outline maps of China for students

Lesson Activities:

1. Introduce the book by reading and discussing chapter one together. Discuss the different aspects of traditional Chinese life described in this chapter. Search for information about the geography of Chongqing and categorize these facts using the five themes of geography. (Students can use a web or chart as a graphic organizer to record these details.) Continue reading the book, either as a read-aloud, independent reading, or in literature circles, and frequently stop to discuss information about location, place, movement, interaction, and regions. While reading the book, include the following activities.
2. Locate the setting of the story: Have students locate China on a globe, wall map, and in an atlas. Have them discuss the location of China in relation to the United States and other countries. Compare the size of China and America. Locate the countries that surround China.
3. Mapping China: Color and label China on outline maps of the world, Asia, and East Asia. Then on an outline map of China, locate and label the major cities in China today: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Nanjing. Below these names, they will add the former names of these cities that are used in the book: Beijing (Peking), Guangzhou (Canton), Chongqing (Chungking), Nanjing (Nanking). Explain that when reading historical fiction or older books, they will find the old names for places in China. Finally, students will add the Yangtze River (or Changjiang) and the Yellow River.

4. Absolute Location: Students will practice giving latitude and longitude for each of these major cities of China, then predict what the climate of each place might be like. Have students verify or revise their predictions after checking a climate map of China in an atlas.
5. Regions of China: On an outline map showing the provinces of China, students will locate and color the province of Sichuan (Szechuan). Then have them divide China into regions: north (of the Yangtze), south (of the Yangtze), the west, Tibetan plateau, and the Mongolian highlands. Have students do quick research reports about each of these regions and how they differ from each other.
6. Create a timeline of events from the story, including locations.
7. After one reading session, discuss the chapter over tea, just as Young Fu observes men discussing politics in a teahouse. The class can make, serve, and sip Chinese green tea while discussing the story.
8. Have students choose one of the sayings from the book (listed below with page references). Students should find the saying in the book and summarize the context in which it appears. In groups, have students think about how one of the sayings could apply to their own lives. Working together, students will write, plan, and act out a “morality play” (skit) about the saying they have chosen.
 - “When in trouble, silence is the best refuge.” (p. 112)
 - “The coward mistakes a rock for a tiger.” (p. 127)
 - “Disaster falls on those who try hardest to avoid it.” (p. 132)
 - “Character is made by rising above one’s misfortunes.” (p. 149)
 - “The shallow teapot does the most spouting, and boils dry most quickly.” (p. 167)
 - “Only the man who can eat the bitterness of bitterness can become the hero of heroes.” (p. 178)
 - “Medicines are bitter in the mouth, but they cure sickness.” (p. 197)
 - “No man is entirely devoid of goodness, and the princely man is tolerant of other men’s weaknesses.” (p. 205)
 - “Disease enters by way of the mouth; most of men’s troubles come out of it.” (p. 215)
 - “The monkey looks in a mirror and wonders at the charm of his own reflection.” (p. 227)
 - “The superior man finds pleasure in doing what is uncongenial.” (p. 249)
9. Have students update the notes from the 1970s in the back of the Dell Yearling edition by doing research in up-to-date sources. Each student or cooperative group could be assigned a different note to research and report on.
10. Students will write a sequel for the story: another adventure in which Young Fu overcomes adversity, or a prediction about his future. In their sequels, they will give details about China using facts about location, place, movement, interaction, and region.

Extension/Enrichment:

1. Chongqing and Seattle are sister cities. Invite a speaker from the Seattle-Chongqing Sister City Association to come to speak about modern-day Chongqing (contacts at <http://www.scsca.org>).
2. From information learned about Chongqing’s geography, have students share ideas about the ways Chongqing and Seattle are similar and ways they are different.
3. Continue to learn about Chinese geography using *Journey Down the Yangtze*, a curriculum published by the East Asia Resource Center, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Box 353650, Seattle WA 98195-3650; telephone: 206-543-1941; E-mail: earc@u.washington.edu
4. Students can go on a “Chinese New Year Cyber Hunt” on Scholastic’s web site: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/reproducibles/instructor/cyberhunt>. (Other links to Chinese New Year sites at: http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Column/9885/1_9_10_chinese_new_year.htm)
5. More reading — *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution*. Students learn about the life of a sixth grader growing up during China’s Cultural Revolution.

Assessment:

1. Teacher observation of student's understanding of the story and ability to categorize facts of geography by using the five themes as a framework.
2. Map test on important locations of China (the class can contribute items for this test).
3. Teacher observation of participation and presentation of "morality plays."
4. Evaluation of story sequel based on the six traits of good writing: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, and also accuracy of information about China's geography.
5. Students will write a learning log entry about how much they learned about China.

The Five Themes of Geography

Example from:

Young Fu on the Upper Yangtze

by Ann Nolan Clark

◆ Location

East Asia
China
Chungking (now Chongqing): "a city on a hill. . . above the Lin and Yangtze" rivers in the "far western world" of "The Middle Kingdom."
Szechuan (Sichuan) Province
Chairmakers' Way tenement
Farming villages outside of the city

◆ Place

China in 1920s: political upheaval, warlords, and armies.
City: walls and city gates; "ceaseless bustle compared to village life;" miles of streets lined with shops. Port city built high above waters; richest province in Middle Kingdom; poverty and injustice; overpopulated; threat of floods and starvation.
Chungking: famous for bad weather (especially summer heat).
Sichuan: richest province in China.
Chinese traditions: bound feet, arranged marriages, superstitions, paying off debt for New Year celebration, fear of foreigners, place high value on education, Kitchen God and Goddess of Mercy

◆ Movement

Load coolies with bamboo poles
Country roads
Freight boats along the river; oarsmen, trackers
Sedan chair
Arrival of the new "carts" with motors (trucks)
Movement of armies through China is causing misery and chaos.
Communication by hiring letter writers; few people could read and write

◆ Interaction

Shelter: used available materials: wood, bamboo, clay tiles
Fuel: charcoal, expensive; cheaper to buy hot water
Used candles, oil lanterns
Changes in seasons had impact on jobs
Creative recycling of materials; i.e., shoes made from scraps found on streets
Danger of fire in crowded town
Summer heat brought epidemics

◆ Region

East Asia
China
Sichuan, a province of China
China's regions: North, South, East, West
Political Capitals: Peking, Nanking
City vs. countryside
Streets named after trade or type of merchant found there, e.g., Chairmakers' Street

► Lesson 5: *Pacific Crossing* by Gary Soto (Japan)

Theme/Skills:

Lincoln Mendoza, an eighth-grade student in the Mission District of San Francisco, has an opportunity to spend the summer as an exchange student with a family on a one-acre farm three hours from Tokyo. He explores a variety of aspects of Japanese culture, from *shorinji kempo* to *pachinko*, and discovers many similarities between the lives of his host family and his own family back in California. The *Library Journal* review of the book concludes, “For young adults who have never traveled abroad, this novel may be the next best thing.”

Lesson Objectives:

1. Read and discuss a novel about a visit to modern day Japan.
2. Write entries in a reading response journal for each chapter of the novel; record evidence of the five themes of geography that they find in the book.
3. Trace Lincoln’s trip from San Francisco to Tokyo on a map, and use maps and charts to compare location, latitude and longitude, time zones, and climate.
4. Work in cooperative groups to summarize information learned about the geography of Japan; use the five themes of geography as a framework.
5. Write an essay about the geography of Japan.

Time Allotment: 2–3 weeks

Lesson Activities:

1. Use the book as an introduction to a unit on Japan, and use this activity as a K-W-L assignment to find out what students already know about the country. Announce to students, “Imagine you will be going to Japan. Think about what it would be like when you get there. Write a description of what you think it will be like (include physical and cultural characteristics). Explain why you would want to go and what you would like to see there. Include at least one drawing with this written description. Then sketch a map showing where Japan is located in relation to other places. Share with a partner and then share with the class.”
2. Students will keep a reading response journal to record examples of each of the five themes they encounter as they read the book. Go over this material together after each day’s reading and have the students record their findings on a classroom chart.
3. Chapter one describes Lincoln’s flight across the Pacific Ocean from San Francisco to Tokyo. Use maps, atlases, and globes to learn the absolute location of these cities using latitude and longitude and their relative location (where these cities are in relation to the Pacific Ocean, each other, neighboring countries and bodies of water, hemisphere, time zones). Find descriptions in chapter one about Lincoln’s flight to Japan to get another idea of where Tokyo is in relation to San Francisco (length of flight, experiences during flight, etc.).
4. Trace Lincoln’s flight on a map of the Pacific Rim. Label important places in North America and Asia on the map.
5. Upon arrival in Japan (chapter 2), Lincoln notices features of Japanese geography that students can record, classify as natural or physical characteristics of place, and discuss. Some of these examples may reflect other themes of geography, e.g., movement, human-environment interaction, regions.

6. Lincoln can not believe how hot it is in Japan in the summer. Compare climate maps of the West Coast of the United States and East Coast of Asia. Compare climates of San Francisco, Seattle, and cities in Japan. Find weather maps and charts in the daily newspaper and compare temperatures. Find travel guides that describe the climate and summer weather for San Francisco, Seattle, and Tokyo. Read and compare and contrast.
7. Movement: In reading response journals, students keep a chart of all the different ways movement is mentioned in the story. Remind them that movement includes transportation of people and goods in a variety of ways, and movement of ideas (communication and the dissemination of ideas from one country to another). There are many examples of movement in the story, from the cargo car of the bullet train, city bus in Tokyo, family car, airplane across the Pacific, telephone calls between Japan and America, television, availability of ramen in the United States, *shorinji kempo* in San Francisco.
8. Divide the class into cooperative groups and ask them to review their reading response journals for examples of the five themes of geography. They then will create a large “spoke diagram” (or “web”) on a sheet of butcher paper to show examples of the five themes they found in the book. Each group will present its diagram to the class.
9. What did Lincoln know about Japan before he left San Francisco? “They make good cars,” he tells his principal when asked this question. Actually he had been studying *shorinji kempo* at a Zen Center in San Francisco’s Japantown. So his thoughts, which he doesn’t share with his principal, are far more poetic: “His mind formed an image of a *dojo* and a *sensei* sitting in mediation before a bowl of incense. He pictured snow-capped mountains and cherry blossoms parachuting from black branches. He pictured himself as a boy warrior in a white *gi* stained with the blood of his enemies.” (pages 8–9) His summer on a farm in a rural area gives him a more realistic picture of modern life in Japan. Have students compare Lincoln’s original ideas with what he learns about life in Japan. Then have them compare their original assignment (activity #1) with what they have learned about Japan by reading the book and doing other activities.
10. Students will write an essay about the geography of Japan, using their response journals and group charts (see activity #8) as resources.

Extension/Enrichment:

1. The author includes many aspects of modern life in Japan, which can lead to further research and reporting. Topics might include *shorinji kempo* (and other martial arts in Japan), Japanese etiquette, food, bullet train, comparing rural areas with Tokyo, leisure time activities, etc.
2. Students can read another book set in modern or traditional Japan and complete a project showing information about each of the five themes of geography.
3. For further instruction on Japan’s geography, see detailed lesson plan in *Modern Japan: An Idea Book for K-12 Teachers*, edited by Mary Hammond Bernson and Betsy Goolian (lesson plan is available on the web at <http://www.indiana.edu/~japan/japan/mdnjapan/LS28.html>.)
4. Invite exchange students to talk to the class (either Japanese students studying here or American students who have lived in Japan). Compare their experiences to Lincoln’s experiences in the book.
5. Read an interview with Gary Soto, the author of *Pacific Crossing*, on Scholastic’s web site: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/authorsandbooks/authors/soto/bio.htm>
6. Students can take an online quiz on Japanese table manners at “The Virtual Japanese Restaurant,” <http://library.thinkquest.org/20013/quiz.htm>
7. Washington State teachers can contact the Hyogo Business and Cultural Center, 2001 Sixth Avenue, Suite 700, Seattle, WA 98181 for speakers on Japanese culture. This office promotes business and cultural understanding between Washington and Hyogo, our sister prefecture in Japan. Outreach programs offer opportunities to learn calligraphy, origami, tea ceremony, and more.

The Five Themes of Geography

Example from:
Pacific Crossing
by Gary Soto

◆ Location

Japan
Asia
Pacific Rim
“across the ocean”
Atami, a farming town
3 hours from Tokyo

◆ Place

Tokyo looked like San Francisco to Lincoln Mendoza: tall buildings, freighters in harbor, bright lights, freeway, billboards, heavy traffic.
Rural town: small one-acre farms, western-style homes, families with both mother and father (Lincoln lived with his mother in San Francisco.)
Hot in summer
Different customs: shoes off in house, public baths, bowling, etc.
Differences in behavior, e.g., not bragging about oneself
Kempo dojo in driveway
Mountain camping and hiking trip
Shrines with jizu

◆ Movement

Airplanes take people to and from Japan.
Freighters carry goods for export.
Cars and trucks on freeways
Bullet train to Tokyo
Communication: letters, telephone, TV
Ideas we have borrowed from Japan:
 chopsticks, martial arts, ramen, etc.
Host family speaks English.

◆ Interaction

Dense population, therefore, small farms.
Families grow own vegetables.
Ways to keep cool in summer
 heat and humidity

◆ Region

Pacific Rim
Asia
East Asia
Tokyo vs. Atami
Comparing Japanese and American life, customs

Further Ideas to Use with Any Novel:

1. Find pen pals from the country being studied:
League of Friendship, Inc., P.O. Box 509, Mount Vernon, OH 43050-0509
Student Letter Exchange, R.R.4, Box 109, Waseca, MN 56093
World Pen Pals, 190 Como Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55208
2. Students imagine taking a trip to one of the countries studied and keep a journal of what they observe and experience.
3. Create story maps. Read a selection from a book. As they listen, the students draw a map of the events in the selection, routes taken by characters, etc.
4. Calculate ways to travel to the sites in the book. Find the distance from students' homes. Figure out the difference in time. What forms of travel would they use, how long would the trip take, and how much money would it cost?
5. Write sequels to the books that use the five themes to emphasize descriptions of the setting.
6. Dramatize parts of the books, emphasizing the geographic themes.
7. Cook food mentioned in the books and discuss what we can learn about a country from the types of food grown and served there.
8. Write journal entries for one of the characters in the book. Include as much information about the geographic themes as possible.
9. Find descriptive passages in the book that illustrate the geographic themes. Illustrate the passages or share them by reading them aloud.
10. Students can create their own tests by having each student contribute a quote from the book that illustrates each of the five themes. On the test, the student identifies the theme.
11. Encourage students to form "mental maps" of the places in the book (what they think the place looks like and where it is). Then students go to the Internet, atlas, or reference materials to compare their mental maps with actual photos and descriptions.
12. Collect information from a variety of sources about the weather in the location being read about. Compare it with the weather in your location. Find information in travel guides about the monthly average temperatures for both places and compare. Which place has the warmest yearly average temperature? The coolest? The hottest monthly temperature? The coldest? The widest range of temperatures? Most rainfall?

~ World Geography Teacher Resources ~

◆ Online Maps

About.com (Geography) — <http://geography.miningco.com>

Bodleian Library Map Room (Oxford University) — <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/nmj>

Library of Congress Geography and Map Division:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gnrlhome.html>

National Geographic Xpeditions Atlas — <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas>

University of Oregon, North American Map Archive:

<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~atlas/america/maps.html>

University of Texas Perry Castaneda Library Map Collection:

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/Map_collection.htm

◆ Additional Teacher Resources

AskERIC Lesson Plans — http://www.askeric.org/cgi-bin/lessons.cgi/Social_Studies/Geography

UN Cyberschoolbus — <http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/qui.html>

Web site with lessons, games, and puzzles based on United Nations information.

“Five Times Five: Five Activities for Teaching Geography’s Five Themes.”

Education World Lesson Planning: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson071/shtml

Geo-Globe Interactive Geography — <http://library.thinkquest.org/10157/geoglobe.html>

Web site developed by students for Think Quest (1997)

Helping Your Child Learn Geography — <http://165.224.220.62/pubs/parents/Geography>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement

This web site offers information on teaching the five themes of geography.

National Geographic — <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/resources/ngo/education>

Offers many lesson ideas for teaching geography, as well as photos, maps, geography bee quizzes, etc.

National Council for Geographic Education — <http://www.ncge.org>

Professional organization for educators K-college.

Read Around the World —

<http://curry.edschool.Virginia.edu/curry/dept/cise/elem/resources/tour/readaroundtheworld/home.htm>

A teacher’s web site with books and activities.

Washington Geographic Alliance, Department of Geography, Green River Community College,

12401 SE 320th Street, Auburn, WA 98092-3699 (offers annual summer teacher-training institutes)

World Factbook (CIA) — <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook>.

Web site gives information for every country.

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(intermediate level; emphasizes themes of geography)
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Making a Personal Connection: An Alternative to the Country Report

By Gretchen Coe
Mercer Middle School, Seattle

• • •

Most people think they don't need to know about places like Nigeria because it's poor in some places. I found out many things about Nigeria, like how beautiful it is, how we trade with them, and how music was started there.
(Heather, grade 6)

Introduction

The study of other cultures or countries is a staple in middle-grade social studies classes. The “country report” is assigned to help students gain a deeper understanding of a region while honing important research and writing skills. Often, however, the finished product may be factually accurate while lacking in the insight, understanding, and excitement that we, as teachers, hope to foster from such an assignment. The following lessons are an attempt to give students a personal global perspective that, in turn, helps students answer the question, “Why should I care?”

Instead of the standard country report assignment, I asked my sixth-grade students to investigate Nigeria so they could write about it in the first person, as if they were living there. The assignment was part of a larger unit of study about Africa. I chose Nigeria because my students would be seeing a Nigerian dance and drumming ensemble at the Seattle International Children’s Festival. However, the process would work well for any country, and the level of sophistication could easily be adjusted to fit the grade level. The Internet was our major source of information due to limited school library resources.

Lesson Objectives:

Through the course of this project, students will:

1. develop an in-depth understanding of a country
2. strengthen Internet research skills
3. connect factual information to their own lives;
4. use factual information to write a narrative account;
5. improve writing and organizational skills.

The project had five stages: preresearch, research, organization and writing, publishing, and assessment/evaluation. In addition, teachers may wish to include a lesson on evaluating information sources, preferably prior to beginning the research process.

► Lesson 1: Introducing the Assignment and Pre-research

In our class we did a project. Not just any project — a living social studies project!
(Kris, grade 6)

Time Allotment: two 50-minute class periods

Materials Needed: chart paper, world maps (textbook maps are okay)

Lesson Activities:

1. Ask students to jot down anything they already know about Nigeria. If they are not sure, they should place a question mark next to it; guessing is encouraged.
2. Once the initial brainstorming is exhausted, provide maps to help students identify additional information based on location and geography. Ideas are shared and posted on large sheets of paper.
3. Tell the students they will be investigating Nigeria so they can write a narrative as if they were living in Nigeria. CAUTION: Expect a considerable amount of confusion and resistance at this stage.
4. Again, in small groups ask students to brainstorm categories of information they will need to investigate to write about their life in Nigeria. They can use their own lives to get ideas. See “Building Blocks of Culture” below for ideas of what to include. (If students have previously discussed the concept of culture, they will have an easier time.) Encourage students to develop a long list of categories. Post the categories on large sheets of paper.
5. Return to the category lists. Ask students to identify the most important categories to investigate for their project.
6. Now each student will write 5–7 guiding questions. The questions should be broad, but specific enough to guide the research process. Modeling effective and ineffective guiding questions helps. An effective question might be “How would I describe my Nigerian family?” An ineffective guiding question might be “What is my favorite food?”

Checking the students’ guiding questions will help the teacher identify questions that need tweaking. Once the guiding questions are approved, students write their questions at the top of notebook paper (one question per sheet).

Building Blocks of Culture

Food	Government
Clothing	Defense
Shelter	Arts/crafts
Family organization	Knowledge/science
Social organization	Religion

► Lesson 2: Introduction to Research Helping Students Put a Personal Face on Statistics

Hi, my name is Zahrah. I am going to tell you about my average Nigerian life.
(Rose, grade 6)

Time Allotment: two 50-minute periods

Materials Needed:

Copies of country profile (such as from the CIA web site World Factbook) for Nigeria and United States (for comparison purposes), teacher-created glossary sheet, students' guiding questions

Lesson Activities:

Before using the country profiles, teachers may want to identify and teach difficult vocabulary through a glossary sheet or other activity.

1. Distribute country profiles of Nigeria and the United States and a glossary sheet. In this guided reading activity, ask students to read one fact at a time, first figuring out what the information means and then discussing how that fact would affect them as citizens of Nigeria. Students will take notes to answer their guiding questions. To grab students' imagination, I recommend starting with the section entitled "People."

Example: Compare birth rates in Nigeria and the United States (Nigeria: 40.16 births/1,000 population; United States: 14.2 births/1000 population). Once students understand what the numbers mean they might conclude that it would be realistic to include the birth of a baby in their story. (It is important to use the U.S. statistics as a comparison; by themselves, the statistics may have little meaning for middle-grade students.)

Trying to make sense of a list of statistics can be difficult for some students who are unaccustomed to making a personal connection to factual information. A valuable discussion you might have with students relates to the meaning of "average" when we look at statistics. Students often point out that they personally do not match the U.S. statistics. It is important for them to understand how these statistics are obtained and what we can infer from them.

2. Teachers may need to continue this process on a second day. After working through the country profiles, students can highlight guiding questions that remain unanswered.

Words for a Glossary Sheet

Military	Expenditure	Dispute	Export
Import	Economic/Economy	Exchange rate	Terrain
Infant mortality rate	Life expectancy	Literacy	Arable
Suffrage	Executive	Legislative	Judicial
Gross domestic product	Inflation rate	Agriculture	Industry
Services	Labor force		

► Lesson 3: Internet Search

When we had to look up all the information on the Internet or in books, it was kind of hard because some of the books and Internet sites don't tell you exactly what you want to know.
(Roxanne, grade 6)

Time Allotment: Two or three 50-minute periods

Materials Needed: papers with guiding questions and notes; access to the Internet

Lesson Activities:

Any teacher who has used the World Wide Web for research knows the potential problems students encounter in pursuit of accurate, useful information. Trouble spots include locating “good” sites, using the effective search words for maximum results, keeping track of the information, and having a focus for investigation rather than random searching.

When students use the Internet for research, often too much time is spent looking for information with little or nothing to show for it. A certain amount of surfing can be useful, but often it creates a great deal of frustration for students and teachers. Teachers can help students conduct more productive searches by doing some preliminary work.

Increasing Productive Online Searches

1. What exactly am I looking for?

One key to more productive searches is asking students to prepare prior to going online. Students go back to their 5–7 guiding questions. On a chart, they list each question and plan how they might go about searching. Model how the chart can be used to facilitate searches.

Guiding Question:	Key Word(s)	Picture or Text?	Possible Site(s) Noncomputer Sources
1. How would I describe the place where I'm living?	Nigeria + housing Nigeria + village Nigeria + city Nigeria + building	Picture or text	Ask Jeeves

2. What sites will help me?

Encourage the sharing of sites by posting a large sheet of paper listing useful annotated web sites. Students then add other sites (with short descriptions) to assist classmates.

3. What's the deadline?

Help the students to set research deadlines. Students set a goal for the number of questions they will answer each day. Teachers should monitor their progress throughout the research process.

► Lesson 4: Organization and Writing

The most challenging part of the project was making it sound real and not over-cramming it with facts that make it sound cheesy.

(Joe, grade 6)

Time Allotment: 2 class periods

Materials Needed: notes based on guiding questions

Lesson Activity:

After two or three days of searching, the students begin writing. Once the rough draft is started, students become aware of what information is still missing.

Assessment/Evaluation: Creating a Scoring Guide

Once the rough drafts are started, ask students to help construct a scoring guide or rubric. Providing input on the scoring guide helps students focus on what constitutes a quality project. My students came up with the scoring guide on page 69. After students have completed a rough draft, they use the rubric to guide the peer editing process. Ideally, students work in groups of three or four and edit several papers. Standard rewriting and proofreading complete this stage of the process.

► Lesson 5: Reflection

It helped me to see Nigeria as more than just another land area but as a country with problems and good things.

(Alex, grade 6)

Time Allotment: 1 class period

Reflection is a useful tool to deepen the learning process. Students gain insight into how and what they learned. Teachers gain information about what worked and what did not work. I asked my student three questions: What did you like best about the project? What was the most challenging part of the project? What did you learn as a result of doing this project? Their responses have given me ideas about how to refine the project for next time. In addition, their responses helped me to assess how well they met the assignment's objectives.

Conclusion

The push in schools to meet literacy standards frequently forces social studies into a “backseat” subject. Yet, the content of social studies is ideal for expanding reading, writing, and thinking skills. The project described in this unit reinforces many of the reading and writing EALRS while giving students a reason to care about another part of the world. Focusing on literacy should not exclude social studies topics, and with a little planning, social studies can be the vehicle that drives our students toward becoming more thoughtful and skilled citizens.

Nigeria Project Scoring Guide

Name: _____ Date: _____

Six Writing Traits

Ideas and Content

Paper has clear purpose.
Clear details and examples to help reader understand.
Stay with main idea; no unnecessary details.
Writer shows he/she knows subject.

Organization

Introduction makes reader want to keep reading.
The order makes sense.
Details in paper go together.
Ending is strong.

Voice

Writing shows author's thoughts and feelings.
Writing sounds like you, not someone else.
Writing has personality.
Writing is clear for the reader.

Word Choice

My words paint a picture.
Description is strong.
Metaphors and similes are used.
I have tried to say things in a new or different way.

Sentence Fluency

My sentences are clear and make sense.
My sentences are of different lengths.
My sentences begin in a variety of ways.
My paper would be easy to read out loud.

Conventions

I have divided my paper in paragraphs.
My punctuation and capitalization are correct.
I have spelled all words correctly.
I have proofread my paper to correct any errors.
I have included a heading and title.
My paper is typed, double-spaced with size 12 font.

Information

My paper is based on facts.
My story really could happen (feasible).
I have a minimum of one fact per paragraph.
My facts are accurate and used creatively.

Illustration

My illustration fits what I've written about.
My illustration shows effort because it is done carefully.
It is creative.
It is colored in neatly.

Total points _____ Grade _____

Comments:

~ Useful Resources ~

AFRO-America@The Afro-American Newspapers Home
www.afroam.org/children/discover/discover.html

The kids' section gives information about Nigeria and other countries. The games and fables sections are fun.

Belanus, Betty; Baird, N'Daiye Diana. "A Nigerian Yoruba Naming Ceremony in Washington, D.C." The African Immigrant Folklife Study Project, April 1996.
www.folklife.si.edu/vfest/africa/start.htm

Information on customs and traditions of African immigrants; site also provides links to Yoruba people.

Central Intelligence Agency. Nigeria. *World Fact Book*, 2001.
www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ni.html

Site has useful country statistics, but students will need help to interpret some of the information.

Menzel, Peter. *Material World: A Global Family Portrait*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994.

This book will get kids thinking about how possessions explain much about a culture (Nigeria is not included).

Olunbumni. *Motherland Nigeria*, August 5, 2001.
www.motherlandnigeria.com/index.html

This is the best site we found to get kids excited. They loved the section on names and their meanings. It's a great place to get started. There are parts geared to kids.

Onyefulu, Ifeoma. *Ogbo: Sharing Life in an African Village*. San Diego: Gulliver Books, 1996.

This book can serve as a model for showcasing a child's life in Nigeria. Great photos.

Beyond Christmas:

Developing Reading and Writing Skills as Students Explore Winter Traditions



By Anne Fitzpatrick
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Introduction

This unit was initially a response to the diversity of my classroom. My students are of many different faiths and cultures, but we all share in our awareness of the darkening days of November and December. My research into this time of the year led me to a discovery: the world is rich in stories, celebrations, and symbols around the winter solstice.

Virtually every culture in the world observes the winter solstice. Such diverse groups as Native Americans (of both South and North America), Celts, Persians, Asians, and Africans held solstice celebrations. In ancient cultures, solstice was known as Sacaea to the Mesopotamians, as the Festival of Kronos to the ancient Greeks, and as Saturnalia to the Romans. More modern cultures also observed the solstice. Norwegians did not hunt or fish during the 12 days of the Yule as a way of letting the weary world rest so that the sun might return.

Learning about solstice celebrations was an opportunity for my students and for me to become more culturally and globally aware. At the same time, my students could hone their reading and writing skills. With geography and literature as the anchor, students use literacy strategies to explore winter traditions in their own and other cultures.

Essential Question:

How does a natural event like the winter solstice influence cultures and traditions around the world?

Objectives:

- Students will compare and contrast myths, legends, and folktales about the winter solstice.
- Students will understand the origins of many winter symbols and myths.
- Students will analyze their own geographic setting and create a myth about the winter solstice.

Time Allotment: 5–10 days

Resources:

Myths, legends, and folktales from around the world,
Web sites and books on winter solstice traditions and symbols

► Lesson 1: Darkening Days Awareness

Lesson Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to make sure students are aware of the shortening days of the season and to have them explore how ancient people reacted to this change.

Materials:

Globe, flashlight, diagrams of Earth's rotation around the sun, "Winter Solstice" (page 72), word splash worksheet, and transparency

Lesson Activities:

1. Ask students what they notice about the seasonal changes. Put their responses on the overhead (they might notice falling leaves, shortening days, colder/rainy weather, etc.). Have them discuss why these changes are taking place.
2. If they can describe why these changes are taking place, move on to step 3. If not, use your globe and flashlight to illustrate the reason for the darkening days.
3. Pass out the word splash worksheet (page 73). It lists 20–25 words in the reading that relate to the topic and that students might not know. Students work in pairs to try to find connections between words. (Guessing is encouraged.) They draw a line to connect the words and then on the line write what they know or think the connection might be. Put a transparency of the word splash on the overhead. Ask students to come up and show their connections. Have students discuss other connections they might have made.
4. Hand out the reading on the winter solstice. When students are finished reading, have them turn again to their word splashes and discuss with their partner how they might change the connections they made now that they have read the article. As a class, discuss the connections and what they learned from the article.

Extensions:

1. Students write a paragraph on what they learned about the winter solstice and how this time of the year affects their lives.
2. Students visit web sites to put together presentations (multimedia if possible) on such topics as: symbols of winter, the science behind the winter solstice, winter celebrations, etc.

Winter Solstice

Have you noticed that during November, December, and January the sun comes up later and goes down earlier than at any other time of the year? It is part of the natural change of the seasons caused by the tilt of the Earth as it rotates around the sun. The shortest day of the year is called the winter solstice. This is when the northern hemisphere has its longest nights.

Our ancestors, thousands of years ago, noticed and worried about the shortening days and lengthening nights. Think of how frightening it must have been to see the sun spend less and less time in the sky. Plants seemed to die, birds and animals disappeared. Harsh winter conditions and scarce food supplies meant many people would not make it through the winter.

As the weeks grew closer to the solstice, people worried more and more. What if the sun never came back? Would they live forever in night? Was there anything they could do to bring back the sun? Rituals and ceremonies were born to encourage the return of the sun.

Winter solstice observances became traditions in almost every culture in the world. For example, Native South and North Americans, Celts, Persians, Romans, and peoples of Asia and Africa practiced solstice rituals. In ancient Mesopotamia, the solstice was called Sacaea. The Greeks called it the Festival of Kronos, and the Romans celebrated Saturnalia. According to Norse tradition, the Valkyrie looked for souls to bring to Valhalla during Yule. And the 12 days of Christmas came from a Norwegian practice of abstaining from hunting and fishing during the 12 days of the Yule. They figured if they let the world rest, the sun would want to return.

In old Russia during the winter solstice, grain was thrown at doorways to ensure that households had enough food to get them through the winter. Cows in France and Germany found ashes from the Yule log mixed with their food. This was supposed to keep animals healthy and to help them have calves.

Evergreen trees have played an important role in winter solstice rituals. The idea of selecting a “sacred tree” is a practice found in many ancient cultures. Evergreens held a place of high esteem to early people because they stayed green during the winter while other plants lost their leaves and appeared to be dead. People believed evergreens must have special powers because they thrived in winter.

Holy offerings were often placed on the ground beneath a special tree, or in its branches. In Mexico, Mayans offered teeth and locks of their hair to a giant evergreen tree. In China, red banners with words of praise and thanks written on them were draped over the branches of a sacred tree. The Lapps of Finland kept some of the food from their solstice feast. They put it into a small container shaped like a tiny sailing boat, and the boat was placed in the boughs of a pine tree.

Wreaths are another symbol of the solstice. The wreath’s circle symbolizes the wheel of the year and the end of another cycle. Traditional wreaths were made of evergreens, holly, and ivy. The evergreens were meant to represent continuity. Holly and ivy were believed to protect people against evil. And, like evergreens, holly was believed to be magical because it had berries in the middle of winter.

Since the winter solstice was marked by the sun, people believed lighting fires was a way to give the sun new power. The traditional burning of the Yule log dates back thousands of years. Often a piece of the previous year’s Yule log was used to light the new Yule log. On the practical side, lighting fires must have cheered people up as they struggled to stay warm through the cold winter months.

So, as you celebrate your own traditions at this time of the year, remember that much of what we see and do during the winter holidays has roots that go back thousands of years. Even more importantly, these are traditions that come from many cultures and from many parts of the world.

Winter Solstice Word Splash

solstice

pine

wreath

harvest

vigor

abstain

Sacaea

Kronos

Eternal

observance

sun

fade

Valkyrie

dormant

evergreens

harsh

Yule

solar

weary

winter

sleep

scarce

sustenance

tree

night

feast

pine

rebirth

“. . . even the lover of myth is in a sense a philosopher, for myth is composed of wonders.”

Aristotle

What is a Myth?

- Written as fiction
- Addresses theme of good conquering evil
- Explains natural mysteries and origins
- Features gods and goddesses
- Shows relationships between gods and humans (often religious)

What is a Folktale?

- Written as fiction
- Set in no particular time or space
- Presents how human beings cope with the world they live in
- Features people who may have magic transformations
- Uses animals that talk and/or act like people
- Often teaches lessons

What is a Legend?

- Written from history
- Concerns particular people, places, and events
- Features heroes and/or heroines
- Glorifies history or beliefs of group

► Lesson 2: Comparing Stories of Winter

Lesson Objective:

This activity introduces students to the elements of myths, folktales, and legends, and acquaints them with examples of this genre from around the world. In addition, students work on paragraphing skills as they analyze and compare the different examples of myths, folktales, and legends.

Resources (Myths, Legends, and Folktales):

- Bevan, Finn. "The Day the Sun Went Out." In *Sacred Skies: The Facts and the Fables*. Danbury, CN: Children's Presss, 1997.
- Chatterjee, Debjani. "The Monkey Bridge to Lanka." In *The Elephant-headed God and Other Hindi Tales*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Hirsh, Marilyn. *The Hanukkah Story*. New York: Bonim Books/Hebrew Publishing Company, 1997. (Reprinted on p. 79)
- McDermott, Gerald. *Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1993. (Excerpt reprinted on p. 78)
- Osborne, Mary Pope. "Marriage of the Ice Maiden." In *Favorite Norse Myths*. New York: Scholastic, 1996.
- Osborne, Mary Pope. "The Story of Demeter and Persephone." In *Favorite Greek Myths*. New York: Scholastic, 1989.

Materials Needed: chart paper, myths, folktales, legends, myth/folktale/legend overheads

Lesson Activities:

1. On a chart (or overhead) write Myths, Folktales, Legends. Under these headings, create three columns, naming them: K -W -L (Know, Want to Know, Learned). Ask students to tell what they know about myths, folktales, and legends. Encourage students to think about possible differences between the three. After this discussion, ask students what they now want to know about myths, folktales, and legends. Write this in the "W" column.
2. Put the transparency describing myths, folktales, and legends on the overhead (page 74), or hand each student a copy. Ask about similarities and differences between the three.
3. Read a myth, folktale, or legend out loud to the class. Either in groups or with the entire class, have students identify which it is and defend their conclusion using the traits.
4. Divide students into groups of three or four. Give each group a myth, legend, or folktale about the winter solstice. The groups read it silently or aloud. When they are done reading, have them discuss whether it is a myth, folktale, or legend and give their reasons using the traits. They each then write a paragraph telling whether they think the story is a myth, legend, or folktale, explaining their reasons.
5. Students repeat this process over two weeks until they have read at least six different story examples. For each they discuss, then write a paragraph about whether the story is a myth, folktale, or legend.

Extensions:

In addition to noticing the traits of a myth, folktale, or legend, consider the geography and culture of the country or region where each tale comes from and discuss how they are reflected in the setting, plot, and characters of the story.

► Lesson 3: Creating Our Own Winter Tales

Lesson Objective:

After exploring the symbols and stories of the winter solstice, students now get the opportunity to create their own folktale, myth, or legend using the familiar geography of the Pacific Northwest.

Materials Needed: chart paper, alphabet grid, trait sheets, narrative writing sheet

Lesson Activities:

1. On chart paper create a 4 x 6 grid of 24 squares. Put a letter of the alphabet in each square, combining XYZ in the last box. Hand out a smaller alphabet grid to each student. Have them write geographic attributes of the Pacific Northwest on their grids using the alphabet taxonomy. For example, students might put “mountains” under “M,” or, more specifically, “Olympics” under “O.” When students seem to be out of ideas, ask for volunteers to come up and write three of their entries on the chart paper. Have students add any ideas they like from the larger grid to their personal grid.
2. Students now begin constructing their own myth, legend, or folktale that will explain the winter solstice. Use your favorite graphic organizers (including the alphabet taxonomy) to help students create an outline of their story. With your students, develop a rubric that clearly sets expectations for the completed story.
3. Write a rough draft, peer edit, and/or teacher edit.
4. Write a final draft.
5. Have students share their tales with the class. Have students use the rubric to comment on what they like and what they think could be improved.

Extensions to Activity 3

Two classes can do the same activity. Students exchange stories and ask their partners to draw (by hand or computer) an illustration of the story. Make a book or display from the stories and drawings. (This activity could also be done with pen pals by email.)

Myth-building Taxonomy

A	B	C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	XYZ

Raven

(From the Pacific Northwest)

As told by Gerald McDermott

• • • • •

Raven came. All the world was in darkness. The sky above was in darkness. The waters below were in darkness. Men and women lived in the dark and the cold.

Raven was sad for them. He said, "I will search for light."

Raven flew across valleys and across mountains. He flew along rivers and over lakes. There was darkness all around. Then he saw a bit of light far away. He flew and flew and came closer to the light. The light was at the edge of the water.

The light came from the house of the Sky Chief, and it was shining. Raven perched high in a pine tree on the shore. Raven watched. He saw a beautiful young girl emerge from the shining house and go to the edge of the water. She was the Sky Chief's daughter. She knelt and drank some water from a woven basket.

Raven changed himself into a pine needle. He fell down from the tree and floated on the water. When the girl drank again, she swallowed the pine needle. After a time, the girl gave birth to a child. The child was small and dark with shiny black hair and tiny black eyes.

Who do you think the child was?

It was Raven. Raven had been reborn as a boy child. The Sky Chief was delighted with his daughter's child. He called him grandchild. He played with the boy and carved toys for him. He invited the elders to come and see the curious, wonderful child.

The elders gathered in the shining house with the Sky Chief and his daughter. They watched Raven-child crawl around the floor of the lodge. The child pretended to play. All the time, though, he was really trying to find where the light was hidden.

He saw a box in the corner of the lodge. The box was large. It was carved and painted with many colors. The box was bright. It glowed. Raven-child said, "Ga! Ga!"

"What do you want?" asked his mother. Raven-child said, "Ga! Ga!" He began to cry.

"What does the child want?" asked the elders. Raven-child said, "Ga! Ga!" He cried and cried. "My grandchild wants the box," said Sky Chief.

The young woman placed the box in front of Raven-child but he continued to cry. She took the lid off the box. Inside was a smaller box. She took the lid off that box, too. Inside was a smaller box. When his mother took the lid off that box, light poured out of it. Light inundated the room. Inside the box was a shining ball, blazing with light.

What do you think the ball was?

It was the sun.

"Give him the ball," ordered Sky Chief.

His mother gave Raven-child the ball. Raven-child stopped crying. He began to play with it. He rolled it around the floor of the lodge. "Ga! Ga!"

Then he changed into a bird. "Ha! Ha!"

He became Raven once again. "Caw! Caw!"

Sky Chief, his daughter, and the elders looked on in amazement. Raven plucked up the ball of light into his beak, flew through the smoke hole of the lodge, and disappeared into the dark sky. Raven flew over the valleys and the mountains. He flew along the rivers and across the lakes.

Raven threw the sun high into the sky, and it stayed there. This is how Raven stole the sun and gave it to all the people.

And why do the people always feed Raven?

To thank him for bringing them the light.

From *Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest*
by Gerald McDermott (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993).
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The Hanukkah Story

(Jewish)

Adapted from a story by Marilyn Hirsh

• • • • •

Long ago, the Jews lived mainly in Israel. It was called “Judea” then. Most of the people were farmers and shepherds. They plowed their fields and took care of sheep and goats. Judea had one large and important city called Jerusalem. There, high on a hill, stood the Holy Temple of the Jewish people. At harvest time, the farmers came to the temple to offer their first fruits to God. Rich people also brought gifts of gold and silver.

In those days, Antiochus the Fourth, King of Syria, ruled Judea and some other small countries. But he really wanted to be king of the whole world. The Jews paid taxes to Antiochus. They didn’t bother him and he left them alone — for a while. But soon, Antiochus decided it was time to conquer more countries.

“I’m going to be Antiochus the Greatest,” he bragged. “Everyone I rule must do exactly as I say. I’ll conquer more people and make them obey me, too. But I’ll need a bigger army — and armies cost money!”

He began to look around his kingdom for money. He remembered about the riches in the Temple in Jerusalem. “Aha!” he exclaimed. “I am the King. Jerusalem belongs to me. The Temple is in Jerusalem. The treasure is in the Temple. So, of course, the treasure is mine!” The king sent his soldiers to bring him gold and silver from the Temple, but the high priest would not let them in. So Antiochus sent one of his own friends to be the new high priest.

“What a lot of gold and silver they have here,” said the high priest. “I’ll send some to the king and I’ll keep some for myself. I’m sure no one will miss it.” Well, of course, the other priests did miss it and they told everyone. The people were so angry that the high priest had to surround the Temple with soldiers to protect himself. Meanwhile, Antiochus was adding more and more soldiers to his army. Soon he felt ready to conquer more countries. “I’ll start with Egypt,” he declared. So off he went, taking a huge army with him.

Someone in Jerusalem heard that Antiochus had been killed. “The king is dead,” whispered one person to another. Soon everyone knew. Many Jews rushed to the Temple. “Down with the high priest!” they shouted.

While the high priest and the soldiers fought the people, Antiochus surprised everyone by arriving with his army. He had not been able to conquer Egypt. When he saw the fighting in Jerusalem, he was very angry. “Attack!” he yelled to his soldiers.

The Jews fought back, but they had no leader and many of them were killed. When Antiochus returned to Syria, he left thousands of soldiers in Jerusalem. They put statues of their gods in the Holy Temple. But this was not enough for Antiochus.

“The trouble all started in the Temple,” he thought. “It must be their God. The Jews must stop praying to their God and start praying to my gods.”

So Antiochus made laws that forced the Jews to worship Zeus and forbade them to celebrate the Sabbath or study their sacred book called the Torah. He sent his soldiers all over Judea to enforce the laws. One day, the soldiers came to a small village. They set up a statue of Zeus in the main square with an altar in front of it. Then they ordered the village elder, Mattathias, to bow down to the statue and sacrifice a pig. “Never!” cried Mattathias. “I worship the one God — the King of Kings — and I will bow down to no other.”

Another villager who was afraid of the soldiers spoke up. “I will sacrifice to Zeus,” he said. Mattathias was so enraged that he killed the man. Then he and his five strong sons attacked the soldiers. All the people of the village joined the fight. To everyone’s amazement, they won. They also realized that they would have to leave to survive. They took weapons from the fallen soldiers and packed whatever they could carry and climbed to a new life of hiding in the caves in the hills. When other Jews in Judea heard of their bravery, many came to join them. Gradually, they became an army.

Mattathias was too old to lead the army. He decided that his son Judah should become the leader. “You are the strongest of my sons,” he told Judah. “You are called the Maccabee or the hammer. Train our people to be hammers, too. Strike the Syrians again and again.” Mattathias died soon after. Judah trained his army and began surprise attacks on the Syrians. Antiochus sent bigger and bigger armies against the Maccabees, but each time they were defeated. Finally, the Maccabees were able to enter Jerusalem and free it and the Temple.

The Maccabees smashed the statue of Zeus. Then everyone pitched in to clean up the Temple and rebuild the altar. When it was ready to be rededicated, oil was needed to light the eight-branch Menorah. The Maccabees found one jug of pure oil, only enough oil for one day. But to the amazement of everyone, it burned for eight days until new oil could be prepared.

From Marilyn Hirsh: THE HANUKKAH STORY, copyright 1977.
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~ Winter Solstice Information Resources ~

◆ Web Sites (accessible as of January 2002)

<http://web.infoave.net/~tnorris/lesson.htm>

Lesson plan for Myths, Folktales, and Legends

<http://members.aol.com/Donnpages/Holidays.htm>

Information about holidays . . . good links, too

<http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/storfolk.html>

Great resource site from Canada

<http://www.christmastrees.on.ca/ednet/lesson1.html>

Information about the history of the Christmas Tree

<http://128.138.129.27/library/bpl/child/season/sols1.html>

A brief history of the Winter Solstice

<http://www.circlesanctuary.org/pholidays/WinterSolstice.html>

An obvious fan of celebrating the winter solstice. . . some good info

http://www.religioustolerance.org/winter_solstice.htm

Information about celebrations from other religions and countries

<http://www.holidays.net/ramadan/> — About Islam and Ramadan

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson040.shtml — About Hanukkah

<http://www.picapro.com/picapro/mind.htm> — Information about solstice traditions

<http://www.candlegrove.com/solstice.html#open> — Around the world information

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/3217/Solstice.html> — More solstice links

<http://www.best.com/~teresar/solstice.html#others> — Solstice connections around the world

http://www.windows.ucar.edu/cgi-bin/tour_def/the_universe/uts/winter.html

Scientific explanation of winter solstice

<http://www.utah.edu/Planetarium/Winter.html> — Another take on winter solstice background

http://www.freethoughtforum.org/Atheism%20Articles/the_winter_solstice_and_christmas.htm

Origins of solstice

<http://www.celestia.com/SRP/JA98/WinterSolstice.html> — More background

◆ Books and Magazines

America's Ancient Skywatchers. *National Geographic Magazine*,
March 1990.

Cacha, Frances B. Festivals of the Darkest Days. *The Social Studies*,
January/February 1980, pp 40–42.

Edwards, Carolyn McVickar. *The Return of the Light: 12 Tales from Around
the World for the Winter Solstice*. New York: Marlowe & Co, 2000.

Elmer, Margaret, et al. *Festivals of Light: A Hands-on Activity Book*.
Seattle: The Children's Museum, 1997.

Karas, Sheryl Ann. *The Solstice Evergreen*. Fairfield, CN: Aslan Publishing, 1998.

Jackson, Ellen. *The Winter Solstice*. Brookfield, CN: The Millbrook Press, 1994.

We're All Just People After All



By Joanne Dufour



Introduction

These lessons contain reading, writing, and research activities from social studies and language arts, and shares ways to compare these themes to events relevant to students' lives.

Themes

Resolving conflict
Overcoming prejudice and discrimination
Rural poverty
Importance of religious traditions in a culture
Cultural differences regarding getting an education

Skills

Analyzing characters in a story
Writing from point of view of another
Use word meaning skills and strategies

Lesson Activities

This unit consists of four specific lessons each based on a short story or set of stories from distinct geographic areas with themes that are international in scope.

Lesson Note for Teachers:

These stories address universal themes of respect and conflict, prejudice and custom in a range of time periods and settings. Students may be encouraged to make more comparisons at the conclusion of these readings. The theme of respect, the focus of lesson 3, could also be applied to one the short stories in lesson 4, "*The Same Old Road*" by Pfani Takalani. Issues of rural poverty are common to both readings. Our own students' experiences with these themes as they apply to their own lives today help them to establish a basis for appreciating the human condition and its commonalities.

► Lesson 1: A Sense of Justice; A Sense of Humor

Reading:

“The Man Who Stole Smoke” — by Arlo T. Janssen

A humorous story set in Paris and based on a French folk tale about a beggar and a chef.

Themes/Skills: Resolving conflict, analyzing characters in a story

Lesson Objectives:

To understand the role of a mediator in solving conflict

To appreciate humor and food as parts of culture

Time Allotment: 1 day for discussion of story; more time for completion of assessment

Resources Needed:

- Copies of “The Man Who Stole Smoke” (pages 83–85)
- Pictures of Paris and street cafes; a map of France; a book of French cuisine

Lesson Activities:

Character analysis. Read the story aloud or assign it to be read by the students. Discuss with students the answers to the following questions:

1. What do you learn from the story about the following characters: the chef, the beggar, the policeman? Which character do you find the most interesting. Why?
2. Where is Paris? What impressions about the city can you draw from this story? (Introduce its location on a map of France. Share pictures.)
3. What kind of impression does the author give us about the beggar? How does the beggar describe himself? What about him appeals to the crowd? Do you think this man was always a beggar? Explain.
4. The beggar claims that he should not have to pay for smoke because it was public property. Do you agree or disagree? What does the policeman decide? How is the chef compensated for the smoke? What is the chef’s reaction? How does the story end?

Extension/Enrichment

Draw a picture of the character that interests you the most and try to represent in your picture as many details about your character as you learn from the story.

The French culture is famous for its food and Paris is famous for its street cafes. What are some famous French dishes? What kinds of food are served in street cafes? What makes them popular?

What is public property? Is the air we breathe free? How have our ideas about the use of air changed? (Concepts of air pollution — costs of cleaning polluted air; air space — building taller buildings; permission to fly over an area, etc.)

Invite persons familiar with France — especially Paris — to talk to your class about life there.

Students can make up their own stories about a character or characters involving the use of something that is “free” that results in a conflict. Create a humorous conclusion to this story. The story can be enhanced with original drawings that bring it to life.

The Man Who Stole Smoke

By Arlo T. Janssen

• • • • •

This story is based on a French folk tale.

In the city of Paris, many years ago, there was a street café that was famous for its roast meat. The chef prepared the roasts on a large rotisserie over a hot bed of coals in full view of all who passed by. The sight and smell attracted many people. This was exactly what the chef wanted, because many who stopped only to watch finally sat down to order dinner or at least a hot beef sandwich.

There was one man, however, whom the chef didn't like to see near his roasts. He was a vagrant who begged in the streets in that part of Paris each afternoon long enough to get enough money to buy a bottle of his favorite wine. The chef didn't want this shabbily dressed man to mingle with his customers. In his opinion, it was not good for the business. And also, it seemed that every time the beggar joined the people who stopped to watch the chef, a corner of one of the roasts would mysteriously disappear at about the same time the beggar did. In spite of the chef's many efforts to get rid of him, however, the beggar came back almost every day about dinner time.

One afternoon the beggar had become weary of asking a thousand times, in a pleading voice, "Can you spare a little change to feed a man who's down on his luck?" So, he quit begging a little early and wandered over to the street café.

Since he came a little before the usual crowd gathered, the chef watched him especially closely. "If he tries anything this time," the chef said to himself, "he won't be able to get lost in the crowd so easily." Then, with one eye constantly on him, the chef acted as though he did not notice that the beggar was there.

At first, the beggar just stood there sniffing the tempting aroma of the roasts that was drifting in his direction. He was quite a sight in his shabby coat about three sizes too big, shoes with flapping soles, pants with patches, and a hat that looked as though a wagon and team had run over it.

After a few minutes, he shuffled a little closer to the rotisserie and put his hands in his pockets.

The chef, thinking the beggar would bring a knife out of his pocket in the palm of his hand, turned, ready to accuse him.

The beggar did bring his hands out of his pockets, but there was no knife in either one. To the surprise of the chef, the man had a crust of bread in one hand and a short stick in the other. Then he carefully put the piece of bread on the stick, as though it were a skewer, and held it in the smoke over the roasts. Slowly he turned it this way and that, soaking up as much of the smoke as possible.

The chef didn't know what to do. It made him furious that he was not able to catch the beggar stealing a piece of a roast. Not knowing what to do, he went back to his work.

Still, he was determined somehow to make an example of the wretch, so he would not come back again. He was tired of trying to catch him. "What can I do? What can I say?" he said to himself. In the meantime, though, he did nothing and said nothing.

When the beggar had saturated his crust of bread with the smoke from the roasts, he sat down on the curb nearby to eat it. Before he could take a bite of the bread, however, the chef shouted, "You, there! You're not going to eat that before you pay for the smoke, are you?"

The beggar jumped to his feet in surprise. "Pay for the smoke? Are you crazy, man? Who is charging for the smoke?"

"I am, you thieving tramp! Pay me for the smoke you used or I'll call the police!" The chef had a feeling that if the beggar were threatened, he'd run; but he didn't.

"Go ahead! Call the police!" said the beggar. "If you tell them that I stole smoke, you're going to look pretty ridiculous, don't you think?"

"We'll see in a minute who's going to look ridiculous," replied the chef.

By this time a crowd had gathered to see what was the matter. A police officer nearby saw the crowd and came over to investigate. For a moment the chef wished that he hadn't started all this.

He decided, however, to go through with it because he was quite sure that the policeman would just run the beggar off. That didn't happen though. Instead, the officer simply asked what the problem was.

Before the chef could open his mouth, the beggar showed the policeman his crust of bread and stick and explained to him what he had done.

"And this ridiculous man, sir," he went on, "is now accusing me of stealing the smoke I used to give this morsel of bread a little taste!"

The policeman was surprised to see how aggressive this beggar was. Also, he began to see a little humor in the whole situation, so he merely said to the shabby-looking man, "Go on."

"I can tell by your countenance and your eyes, officer," the vagrant continued, "that you are a reasonable man. And I know that you can surely see that I stole nothing! Nothing at all! What I took was public property."

The policeman became more and more amused as the beggar continued his eloquent speech. However, he listened without a smile on his face, as though he were a judge in a courtroom. The chef stood by, too surprised at the beggar's speech to say anything at all.

"As I said, sir," the beggar went on, "what I used was public property. So in reality, I stole nothing. Observe how even now the smoke from this man's roasts rises into the air of our fair city to become the property of anyone and everyone who breathes it in as he passes. Does this man accuse everyone who takes the aroma into his nostrils? No sir, he does not. But, he accuses me. Why? Is it perhaps because he thinks he can win a case against a poor man? I am a humble man, officer. A simple man. A man who has never had an opportunity. A man who has been kicked like a dog all his life. A man, your honor, who asks for no more at this moment than to be able to eat this crust of bread in peace."

Everyone who listened was feeling sorry for the beggar as they listened to his words. He himself found that he was bringing tears to his own eyes. There was silence for a moment. Then the man wiped his eyes with the ragged sleeve of his coat, raised his head, and continued.

"Do you think, our just judge, that I would steal in full view of all who pass by here? Of course, I would not. If I were a thief, I would perhaps try to sneak off with some of the smoke of the

roasts in the pockets of my coat or under my hat. You will, however, observe that I did no such thing. Please, sir, dismiss this case and let this man's charge against me disappear into thin air like the smoke of the roasts at this moment."

The beggar looked at the policeman. "Please, sir," he went on, "don't reprimand this chef, however. He meant no harm. Only dismiss this case. Let him go back to his work and let your humble servant eat his dinner in peace." Then he went to the curb and acted as though he were going to continue with his meager meal.

The people, who heard the eloquent speech of this wretched-looking man, looked toward the law officer and wondered what he would do.

The policeman was older than most you see on the force. And over the years he had learned quite well how to deal with people in difficult and sometimes strange circumstances. He also had a sense of humor.

There was silence for a moment as the old peace officer stroked his chin, as though he were deep in thought about what to do. By now, everyone in the crowd was craning his neck to see.

Finally, the lawman spoke. "Let me clearly understand this situation here," he said to the beggar. "You say that the chef here has accused you of stealing smoke from his roasts."

"Yes, sir," the beggar laughed. "It's just a bit ridiculous, isn't it?"

"Tell me then, my good man, did you or did you not steal smoke from this man?" said the policeman.

The beggar became excited. "But—but, whoever heard of stealing smoke?" he asked.

"Please answer my question. Did you or did you not take the chef's smoke and use it for your own purpose?"

The beggar was greatly surprised at how this seemed to be turning and was wishing now that he had run when he had had the chance. "Yes sir, I did. I cannot tell a lie." He hoped now that his honest admission of guilt would help him.

The chef's eyes brightened, for it appeared to him that the law officer was on his side.

The policeman spoke again to the beggar. "Do you have a coin in your pocket?" He asked.

"Yes sir," he said, with a puzzled look on his face. He then produced a coin, but tried not to make any of the other change in his pocket jingle.

The old law officer took the coin and placed it in the palm of his hand. Then he extended his hand and moved it up and down as though he were checking the weight of the coin. Gently he tapped it as though he were testing to see if the coin was counterfeit. After that, he held it close to one eye as though he were examining the engraving.

Everyone in the crowd was still silent, as though they were all waiting for some great word of wisdom from the lawman. The policeman then rang the coin several times on the marble top of one of the café tables. Finally, he spoke so that all could hear.

“I do believe that we can settle this matter here and now without going to a magistrate. And I am sure that we can do it to the satisfaction of both parties concerned.”

Then the officer pointed to the beggar and said, “I find this man guilty, as charged, of stealing smoke from the chef’s roasts.”

The chef was just as surprised as the beggar was, but felt pleased that the judgment was in his favor.

Then the lawman clanked the coin one more time on the table top and said, “And my court here in the streets of Paris rules that the guilty party pay the chef with the sound of his money!” Then he turned to the crowd and asked, “Does the jury of the people of the City of Paris concur with the judge?” The crowd cheered their approval.

As the peace officer went his way, he had a look of satisfaction on his face. And all the others were laughing.

Even the chef was chuckling as he returned to his work. The look on his face changed very quickly, however, when he noticed that nearly half of one of his large roasts had disappeared. He looked around quickly only to find that the beggar too had vanished.

From *International Stories* by Arlo T. Janssen.
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► Lesson 2: Getting an Education

Reading: “A Country Boy Quits School” by Lao Hsiang

Themes/Skills:

Cultural differences regarding education
Writing from the point of view of another

Lesson Objectives:

The student will develop an understanding of the difficulties facing a society when another culture imposes its values, culture, and way of life. Students will also gain appreciation for the importance of literacy in the economic development of a society and sensitivity to the culture of the group being educated.

Time Allotment:

1 period to introduce China/literacy issues and read story; 1 to discuss and analyze;
assessment may be done as homework assignment

Resources Needed:

- Copies of “A Country Boy Quits School” by Lao Hsiang, a humorous and perhaps controversial story about the suitability of a textbook; from *A Treasury of Modern Asian Stories*, edited by D.L. Milton and W. Clifford.
- Map of China showing rural and urban areas; information on rates of literacy of various countries (available from www.unesco.org web site) and changes in literacy in China; brief history of historical events in China in the 1930s at the time of this story.

Lesson Activities:

1. If available, pass around a textbook from another country. What is noticeable about the language of instruction, the images, the format? How would students react to using a book like that? Brainstorm situations in which students might be asked to use foreign textbooks.
2. Share information on literacy rates in various countries (including China) — available from standard reference sources. What is the connection between a textbook and the literacy rate? Why might countries have a low rate of literacy?
3. Locate China on a world map.
4. Compare rural and urban areas in China. Ask students what they think this map must have looked like in the 1930s. (Answer: most people lived in rural areas and cities were smaller in size.) How did this situation compare to other parts of the world? To the United States? (Answer: It was the same — most people lived in rural areas. Over the last 50 years the world has seen many more people moving into cities from rural areas. The same is true of the United States.)
5. Explain the notion of a mass education scheme in which the government of a country begins a program to educate everyone. What would this effort require? How could books be made available to students? Where could the books come from? (At the time of this story, less developed countries would often reproduce the textbook from a developed country in its own language with no other changes in content, drawings, or photos. Some countries might use foreign textbooks.)

Lesson Activities (cont):

6. Read the story and discuss the following:
 - (a) Why did the young boy's parents decide to send him to school?
Do you think any of the family members had been to school?
 - (b) What observation did the boy's family make about the books he brought home?
 - (c) Was schooling free? How did the family feel about this?
 - (d) What kind of a student was the young boy?
 - (e) How did the family members react to what the boy was learning?
Why do you think they reacted as they did?
 - (f) What final decision did the family make?
7. If many families reacted the same way, what effect would that have on the success of the mass education program?
8. What changes have occurred in China since the time of this story with regard to educating all the children in the country?

Extension/Enrichment

Look at the textbooks you are using at your school. What kind of pictures and drawings are found in these books? How closely do they resemble the students using the books? If you can, search the school library for an old textbook. Compare the pictures and the artwork used. What comparison can you make? What generalizations would a foreigner make about life in the United States based on seeing this textbook?

Research information on efforts to increase school attendance. What kinds of efforts do countries make to get more children into school and encourage them to complete their education?

From the experience of students in the class, discuss why students decide to quit school today. Is the decision the student's or the parent's? What does our law say about compulsory education? What alternatives exist for students who are not happy in their school? How important are school supplies such as textbooks or other resources?

Invite to class a speaker who can talk more about China and its educational system and the changes that have occurred in educating children. What would textbooks be like in China today?

Write a composition from the point of view of the young boy in the story about his experiences in school. What did he like and dislike about school? How did he feel about the decision of his parents?

Think about examples in U.S. history when a dominant culture was imposed on a minority. What happened, why, and what was the impact on the minority group. (Consider Native Americans, Mexicans, etc.)

► Lesson 3: A Show of Respect

Reading: “A Novice” by Pira Sudham

Themes/Skills:

Rural poverty; importance of religious traditions in a culture
Use word meaning skills and strategies

Lesson Objectives:

To appreciate the role of religion within a culture
To understand factors affecting the movement of people from rural to urban areas

Time Allotment:

Three class periods if class time is used to read aloud

Resources Needed:

- Copies of “A Novice” by Pira Sudham
a story set in Thailand about a young Buddhist monk who decides to return home to his village;
from *People of Esarn* by Pira Sudham (pages 90–93)
- Photos of monks in Thailand — available from *National Geographic* or other library sources
- Map of Thailand — showing location of Bangkok and the area 450 km northeast of Bangkok where the story is set
- Photos of village life in Thailand with water buffaloes

Lesson/Activities:

1. Vocabulary introduction: monsoonal/monsoon, subservient, “looksith”/acolyte, to prostrate, to drone, tuk-tuk, farang, sacred habitat, sanctuary; saffron, begging bowl, pagoda, ladders of rank in monkhood.
2. Find Thailand on a world map and the location of Bangkok and an area 450 km northeast of Bangkok. Share photos about Thai culture — especially showing monks.
3. Read the story aloud or assign it to the class for a reading assignment.
4. Assign or discuss the following questions:
 - (a) How is respect shown in this Buddhist culture?
 - (b) What signs of respect do you see being shown — Who is showing respect to whom?
How is it shown?
 - (c) Why would a family be willing to give up a son to serve a monk? What would the family receive in return?
 - (d) How did the young monk finally get home? What was the reaction of his parents?
 - (e) What message did this young man want to give to other young men who were leaving their rural home for the city?
 - (f) How widespread is the practice of leaving the country to find a better life in the city?
What are the reasons for this phenomenon?
 - (g) Why did the young man decide to return? What would you have done if you were in his place? Explain your reasons.

Extension/Enrichment:

1. While his parents were most likely illiterate, it is likely that the young novice learned how to read and write during his time in the temple. Pretend that you are the novice. Write a letter to your parents explaining your desire to return to the village. Such a letter would have been read to his parents by someone in the village who provides this service.
2. Research some of the basic ideas and practices of Buddhism. Invite a person from a Buddhist temple to talk to your class about the role of monks.
3. Research the growth of cities worldwide. Is the reason for the growth the same as the one presented in the story (the movement of many people from rural to urban areas)?
4. Imagine that 20 years have passed. Write a short story — from the viewpoint of this young monk — of what has happened to him during those 20 years.
5. Invite persons familiar with Thailand to talk to your class about life in Thailand.

Assessment:

- a vocabulary quiz
- one or more of the extension activities above

Vocabulary Quiz:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. monsoon | (a) a safe place |
| 2. subservient | (b) altar boy |
| 3. tuk-tuk | (c) a holy environment |
| 4. farang | (d) to bow down on ground in show of respect |
| 5. looksith | (e) a large cup to receive offerings of food or money |
| 6. prostrate | (f) lemon yellow color |
| 7. pagoda | (g) to make a low-level sound |
| 8. saffron | (h) inferior |
| 9. sacred habitat | (i) a three-wheeled taxi popular in Thai cities |
| 10. drone | (j) a foreigner (usually from the Western world) |
| 11. begging bowl | (k) a house of worship |
| 12. sanctuary | (l) seasonal winds bringing heavy rain or dryness |

Answers: 1-l, 2-h, 3-i, 4-j, 5-b, 6-d, 7-k, 8-f, 9-c, 10-g, 11-e, 12-a

A Novice

By Pira Sudham

• • • • •

Monsoonal rains chilled the morning. My mother rubbed my bare chest and arms with a steamy cloth that she had soaked in hot water. “Be obedient and subservient,” she said to me. “Be good and your good deeds will protect you.”

All the while tears welled up inside me, but I forced myself not to weep. A ten-year-old boy should not cry at the time of parting. I was to go away from home, to be taken by a monk to a city temple.

The monk, a native of our district, resided in a Buddhist temple in Bangkok. While visiting our village, he looked for a boy to become his *looksith*, an acolyte to serve him and take care of his abode.

To give a child up for adoption to a stranger for money or to those who would buy a child for slavery or prostitution was a common practice among the poor in our area. But to offer one’s son to a monk was merit making, a pious deed that would bring good fortune to parents, if not in this life, at least in the next. So being rubbed clean with a warm cloth and told to be good, I was fit to be taken by the monk. Then mother gave me a new pair of shorts and a shirt to replace the old ones I had worn for months. She mumbled something about the certainty of being bogged down by a peasant life in our village. She said that should I stay, I would become just another brute, but to go away, to find water from the next well, so to speak, I might be fortunate enough to forge a better life. Having said so, she wept, asking me to follow her as he was leaving our hut for the village temple.

How many times I had taken our water buffaloes out to the fields to graze. How many times I had slid down the banks of the stream to bathe and to swim, not knowing that one day I would be taken away to a far off place.

“This is him,” said my father after my mother had prostrated three times to show respect to the monk.

Without looking at me, the monk accepted the offering and continued to talk to several laymen who gathered there. My parents said nothing more.

Being among other people, in front of some venerable monks who were taking their breakfast, my parents minimized their presence, as they crouched on the wooden floor of the temple, making themselves as much as possible small and unassertive. A moment later, they prostrated three times, begging leave from the monk. Without a word of goodbye to me, they left. I shivered. How far away the rice fields and the herd of water buffaloes seemed then. Yet everyone at the temple seemed concerned with their own duties, attending to the monks. None would be a witness to my final hour of existence among them. None mourned my departure. I could see myself at the edge of a misty swamp, poised to start a journey.

When the monk was ready to return to his city temple, he made a sign with his fingers for me to follow. Outside the temple gate, a woman waited. A few moments ago she was my mother. At such a parting, she seemed distant and strange. The woman tugged at my shirtsleeve. So together we squatted on the ground. That stranger of a woman scooped a handful of soil, mumbling words of blessing: “May Mother Earth protect the one who is given as a token to serve the holy.”

The handful of earth fell on my head as words of blessing were being blown about by a gust of whirlwind. At that moment I wished I could drop dead, then and there, and remain in the village, a soul without a body, so no one could take me away. Hold fast now, I thought to myself and directed that thought to Mother Earth: I never want to leave you, so protect me always for the sake of innocence. The whirlwind seemed to have carried my plea off with leaves and fragments of memories. Innocence. Childhood. Poverty. Simply joy. Life in a village. The man who was, a few minutes ago, my father, was nowhere in sight.

The old run-down bus that carried me off droned and negotiated slowly with pot holes and loose stones in the muddy track, while I tried desperately to hold on to images of home, the native songs and the poetry of placid rice fields in

all moods and seasons, the immense loss I was experiencing.

I had no idea how far the village could be from the capital, but I longed for a divine power that could save me from having to stay too long in the maze of the city. I longed for the unexpected, which might come by way of a stranger who would say: "I will take you out of here. I will take you back to where you belong and give you back to the rice fields and make the old man and the old woman who have become strangers to you your parents once more."

In vain. I hoped in vain. For now one became merely a body, a nameless being, walking day in and day out along the same streets, and yet everyone seemed a stranger. Thousands of people went by but hardly anyone reached out to meet and speak to one another. Trucks, cars, buses, *tuk-tuks*, and motorcycles belched out fumes and noise. Life in the polluted streets of Bangkok.

In time the strata of ranks and duties became the rules of conduct for my life in the temple. I learned to cope with the confinement of a narrow cell with a mat to sleep on. Life in the temple went on as it had gone on for centuries. There was a sense of duty, the bond of having been given as a token to a monk by one's parents who aimed to gain merit from such a deed. Tea was to be made, the temple ground to be swept, the monks' living quarters to be kept tidy, begging bowls and dishes to be washed and dried. And every morning, I carried a bucket and food containers, going out for alms with the monks.

I became aware of how susceptible one could be to any sign of friendliness and affection in others. When a foreign tourist who visited the temple smiled at me and took my photograph, the whole world seemed to smile with joy. What would a tourist do with a photograph of a temple boy standing in front of a golden pagoda? Could that blue-eyed, fair-haired *farang* be an unexpected stranger who might say: "I'll take you out of here?"

There were about thirty temple boys serving the monks and most of them, like me, were from the country. Yet I was afraid to ask them about their villages for fear of being told that some of them came from a district near my own, that they would learn in time that I was a "giveaway." I was afraid also of homesickness that might be more than I could bear if some began to talk of their

parents and childhood, or when boys from Esarn talked to me in our "Lao" language.

In time I knew that the temple was not only a sacred habitat for monks, but also a temporary sanctuary for poverty-stricken peasants and wanderers, escaping from hunger and drought. Taking refuge under the roof of the temple, they went out to beg during the day and came back to sleep at night, curling up on the bare earth like stray dogs. When there was enough food, I gave some to them, then sat quietly among them to listen to their dialect. Still I did not dare ask them of their villages and their plight, for fear of being told that they too had to give their children to others before setting out on the road of the homeless victims of poverty.

After several years had gone by, I could then tell the extent of their suffering by the number of peasants escaping from drought. When there were only a few wanderers sleeping among the stray dogs within the walls of the temple, the monsoon was bountiful that year and the year before. Between ten and twenty beggars meant that drought hit at random in scattered villages. And when the temple was full of them then I knew that the famine was devastating. Perhaps, one day, the man and the woman who gave me to the monk might turn up among the hungry vagabonds, fleeing from their homes. Would they remember me and take me back with them when the next monsoon season was plentiful?

I wanted so desperately to find out where our village was on a map that I discovered one day on the monk's bookshelf. The vast plain of Esarn on this map did not bear any village names that resembled my own. Perhaps it was such a tiny village that it did not deserve to be included. Yet I could not bring myself to ask the monk. It was tempting to escape, to make my way back to my birthplace, if I could. But how?

Years later, I did ask some beggars from Esarn whether they had heard of my village. None seemed to know of it. And I attempted to cultivate one old man who said he came from Surin, calculating that he might take me away with him, and eventually back to his home in a good year. From Surin, I would have a better chance to look for my village. After I gained his confidence and asked whether I could go everywhere with him and accompany him to Surin, he shook his shaggy grey

head: “Don’t come with me, child. I wander only to wait to die, looking for a place to die. I won’t go back to Surin. I have nothing left there now.”

One summer when there were quite a lot of vagabonds and beggars taking refuge in the temple, a thought occurred to me that my parents might migrate to the city if drought hit hard in our area. So I began my search for them, going from one temple to another, from one street to another. In vain, for all I saw were hundreds of haggard beggars and homeless peasants, all strangers to me, with a similar tale of woe which one could read on their faces.

Eventually the monk whom I had served decided to give up monkhood for marriage. Before he went into the world, he forced me to become ordained as a novice. He shaved my head and gave me a set of saffron robes and a copper begging bowl. “When you reach the age of twenty-one, you will become a monk. You should go to a Buddhist college to get on in rank. You should learn to cultivate followers, a group of influential laymen,” he said by way of a parting gift of advice.

Perhaps that was how he himself got on in the world of monks and found himself a wealthy wife who endowed him with a comfortable modern house in a suburb of Bangkok. I visited him and his wife at their home one day, not so much to see how my former Honourable Brother, the monk, came up in the world or how the well-to-do couple lived, but to find out from him how to reach my home village.

I sat calmly on the floor amid the riches of his living room, refusing the comfort of his sofa. On the floor, I unfolded a map acquired from a petrol station near the temple and he made a cross mark on this map to show the location of my birthplace. He told me where to take a bus in the city and where to change on the route for a local bus, where to wait for the village mini-bus that would take me home eventually. I listened and made a mental note of what he said. All the while that little cross he made on the map became a cross in my heart. It indicated that my birthplace was in the Heart of Esarn. The village was so small that it did not deserve to have its name on the map. How names of towns and villages on the route that I would pass echoed! Korat. Talard Kae. Ban Kong. Ban Kong was closest to the little cross and I must not forget it.

I did not stay long in his house, for, in my mind, the journey home had already begun. A day later, I bade farewell to the abbot of the temple, and gave up my living quarters. Bare footed, with a composure befitting a young novice, I turned to look at the temple, the pagodas, and their spires for the last time. Sorry, I would not climb the ladders of rank in monkhood, nor would I care to cultivate a group of influential followers and rich laymen, for I would rather go back to that unnamed and unmapped village to look for the old man and the old woman to make them my parents once more. I did not want to have a house and a wife in the city, or a car. For without my people and the land, though poor and barren, I would be nothing.

Not far from Korat, the landscape began to look familiar. The plateau of Esarn spread out endlessly, the home of tussocks and gnarled trees. Here armies had traversed and heroic deeds had been committed. In the east, in an ancient hamlet, ten centuries ago, a shrine of stone was built on the banks of a river by the Khmer people. Vanquished by time, the Shrine of Pimai now stands as a monumental ruin.

From Ban Kong, an old local run-down bus took a rough sandy road to the west, and after an hour or so it terminated in a small village. From here a group of children playing by the roadside pointed out the direction to my village, some five kilometers away. I hastened my footsteps, following a track, crossing rice fields and sometimes through the sparse undergrowth. Soon a familiar landscape came into view. The line of tall sugar palms and the canopies of rain trees were unmistakably home.

The exact spot where the old woman, my mother, had dropped a handful of earth on the top of my head, was still there, looking as it was years ago. Here, we said goodbye and there at this very spot I now made a vow. Sitting down on my heels with one hand touching the earth, to endure hardship, poverty and disease, and never leave home again.

At home, an old woman was lost in her concentration of mending a shirt, sitting on a little bench under the decrepit house, mumbling to herself. Standing still, not wishing to disturb her, I could see layers of years on her. Trembling, she looked up and could not recognize me. For a moment she shaded her eyes with the palm of her

hand, searching my face. I, too, trembled, speechless. My tonsure and yellow robe made her prostrate herself on the ground by way of reverence to a Buddhist monk. Standing still, towering above the old squatting woman with the composure of a benign monk, I was not sure, even then, that she recognized me. I had to say, "Mother, I've come home."

During my absence, my father had died. Just before his death, he expressed the wish that he must not be cremated or buried until my return. He said that he knew one day I would return. Respecting his wish, they placed him in a coffin to be stored in a dry place in the village temple. In the presence of the abbot of the temple and my mother, two men opened the lid of the coffin. For a moment, my heart stood still while tears welled up in my eyes, blurring the vision. For a few minutes, I stood solidly still, rooted to the ground, while the sockets, which once were my father's eyes, stared straight at me. My heart cried out: Oh, father, old father, can you see me. I've come back, but too late!

I kneeled and scooped a handful of bones and dust from the coffin and walked away. On our rice fields in which father and I used to work, ploughing and planting and harvesting rice, I let go my

hand and scattered the remains of my father. For the second time, I made a vow to cherish my birthplace, the land of my father and forefathers. No one can take me away ever again. Then I took off the saffron robe and said to a mental image of the Lord Buddha: "May I return to the world, and all men regard me as a man."

In memory of my father, I ploughed the fields during the planting season and reaped the rice in cool December or trekked for miles in search of water in the height of summer. I could endure the circle of a parochial life. If I had not been away at all, I could be like most young men in the country who yearn to go to cities. Now, being home, after years in Bangkok, my life in the village had become more peaceful. Contentment brought some happiness and lessened the hardship and drudgery. I viewed sadly, however, young men and women as they eagerly waited for our local mini-bus to take them away from the village to the lure of the cities. I hoped some of them would become rich and influential and yet have compassion for the poor and the ignorant they left behind, that some of them would learn some truth of city life. They should be able to get out of the maze, when they want to escape, when their love of the land grew stronger in their heart.

from *People of Esarn* by Pira Sudham
(Bangkok, Thailand: Siam Media International Books, 1987).
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► Lesson 4: Creating a Rainbow

Reading: Four short stories set in South Africa (based on interviews by Tim McKee)

Themes/Skills: Overcoming prejudice and discrimination

Lesson Objectives:

- To determine the changes in South Africa in recent years
- To discuss the role of prejudice and discrimination in our lives

Time Allotment: 2–5 days.

Four groups can separately read and discuss a story. With time devoted to background information, the class would need two days to read the stories and answer the questions, less time if the stories are assigned as homework. More time is needed for each group to share its story with the rest of the class.

Resources Needed:

- Copies of “Learning to See” by Leandra Jansen van Vuuren; “Out of the Shacks” by Ricardo Thando Tollie; “The Same Old Road” by Pfano Takalani, and/or “Toward a Rainbow Nation” by Lavendhri Pillay; stories by young South Africans based on interviews by Tim McKee; from *No More Strangers Now: Young Voices from a New South Africa*, New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing Inc., 1998.
- Map of South Africa showing location of Capetown, Johannesburg, and Venda
- Background information on South Africa and apartheid

Lesson Activities:

- If you can locate a copy of *No More Strangers Now* (available from University Bookstore, 206-634-3400), you might wish to show pictures of the authors in their settings to introduce them to the class and ask students what they notice about these young adults.
- Write the word *apartheid* on the board and elicit from students their associations with this word. Provide enough background information (using resources noted) for students to become somewhat familiar with events in South Africa in the last 50 years.
- Locate South Africa on a map and the location of the areas from where these stories are drawn: Capetown, Johannesburg, Venda, and the north country.
- Explain why the election of 1994 was so significant. (Helpful information is found on the Web, at sites such as <http://www.facts.com/cd/094317.htm>).
- Read the stories (together as a class or one story per group) and discuss the following:
 - Who are each of these young people — how would they have been classified under the apartheid system? Where do they live?
 - How has their life experience been different from that of their parents? How do they feel about the changes going on in the country since 1994?
 - What has been their contact with people from different racial groups? How has this affected their perspective?
 - How do they see the future?
 - How do members of the class feel about these issues as they affect our own culture?

Extension/Enrichment:

- Viewing videos about South Africa such as “Cry Freedom,” “The Power of One” or “Endurance”
- Further lessons on issues of prejudice and racism in our country from available sources
- If possible, invite a visitor from South Africa or someone who has traveled to South Africa to share their experiences and observations with the class.

Assessment:

Students will write a composition about their experiences with diverse people and what their experiences have taught them.

~ Best Books ~

We invited teachers to name their best books. They suggested the following fiction and nonfiction books as “great reads” for students in middle or high school.

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| <p>A Town Like Alice – Nevil Shute
<i>Japanese internment of British women</i></p> <p>Among the Volcanoes – Omar S. Castaneda
<i>Guatemala</i></p> <p>Antigone – Sophocles
<i>Greek tragedy</i></p> <p>April Morning – Howard Fast
<i>Revolutionary War</i></p> <p>Betrayal of Trust – Laurie Garrett
<i>The collapse of Global Public Health</i></p> <p>Bull Run – Paul Fleishman
<i>Civil War</i></p> <p>Disposable People – Kevin Bales
<i>New slavery in the global economy</i></p> <p>Enchantment – Orscon Scott Card
<i>Cultural fantasy</i></p> <p>Family Under the Bridge – Natalie Savage Carlson
<i>Poverty</i></p> <p>Guests of the Sheik – Elizabeth Warnock Fernea
<i>Contemporary village life in Iraq</i></p> <p>Guns of August – Barbara Tuchman
<i>World War I</i></p> <p>Guns, Germs, and Steel – Jared Diamond
<i>Cultural diffusion</i></p> <p>House of Dies Drear – Virginia Hamilton
<i>Underground railroad</i></p> <p>Humanity – Jonathon Glover:
<i>A moral history of the 20th century</i></p> <p>I Heard the Owl Call my Name – Margaret Craven
<i>Pacific NW Native American</i></p> <p>In the Time of Butterflies – Julia Alvarez:
<i>Dominican Republic</i></p> <p>In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson
– Bette Bao Lord; <i>Chinese-American</i></p> <p>Ishmael – Daniel Quinn
<i>Human and population/development issues</i></p> <p>Johnny Tremain – Esther Forbes
<i>Revolutionary War</i></p> <p>Journey to Jo’burg – Beverley Naidoo:
<i>South Africa</i></p> <p>Joy Luck Club – Amy Tan
<i>Chinese/American experience</i></p> <p>Kaffir Boy – Mark Mathabane
<i>South Africa</i></p> <p>Lyddie – Katherine Paterson
<i>Lowell mills</i></p> <p>Midaq Alley – Najib Mahfuz; <i>Egypt</i></p> | <p>No No Boy – John Okaido
<i>Asian Americas and WW2</i></p> <p>Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution
– Jiang Ji-Li; <i>China/Mao/Communism</i></p> <p>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes – Eleanor Coerr
<i>Hiroshima</i></p> <p>Soul of a Citizen – Paul Leob
<i>Living with conviction in a cynical time</i></p> <p>Sunder – William Howard Armstrong
<i>African American</i></p> <p>State and Revolution – Vladimir Lenin
<i>Transition from capitalism to communism</i></p> <p>Stilwell and the American Experience in China
– Barbara Tuchman; <i>World War II in China</i></p> <p>Streams to the River, River to the Sea – Scott O’Dell
<i>Journey of Sacagawea</i></p> <p>Summer of the Swans – Betsy Cromer Byers:
<i>Disabilities</i></p> <p>The Acorn People – Ron Jones
<i>Disabilities</i></p> <p>The Age of Fighting Sail – C.S. Forester
<i>Source of Nile</i></p> <p>The Crucible – Arthur Miller
<i>Salem witch trials</i></p> <p>The Eagle of Ninth – Rosemary Sutcliff
<i>Roman Empire in England</i></p> <p>The Egypt Game – Zilpha Keatley Schnyder
<i>Ancient Egypt</i></p> <p>The Good Rain – Timothy Egan
<i>Pacific Northwest issues</i></p> <p>The Jungle – Upton Sinclair
<i>Social change</i></p> <p>The Prince – Machiavelli
<i>Political systems/ideologies</i></p> <p>The Road to Hell – Michael Maren
<i>Effects of foreign and international charity</i></p> <p>The Samurai’s Garden – Gail Tsukiyama
<i>Pre-war Japan</i></p> <p>The Sunflower – Simon Wiesenthal
<i>War crimes</i></p> <p>The Twentieth-Century World An International History
– William Keylor; <i>Historiography</i></p> <p>Things Fall Apart – Chinua Achebe
<i>Colonial Africa</i></p> <p>Uncle Tom’s Cabin – Harriet Beecher Stowe
<i>African American</i></p> <p>Wild Swans – Jung Chang; <i>20th century China</i></p> |
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Suggested by:

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